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VOL. II

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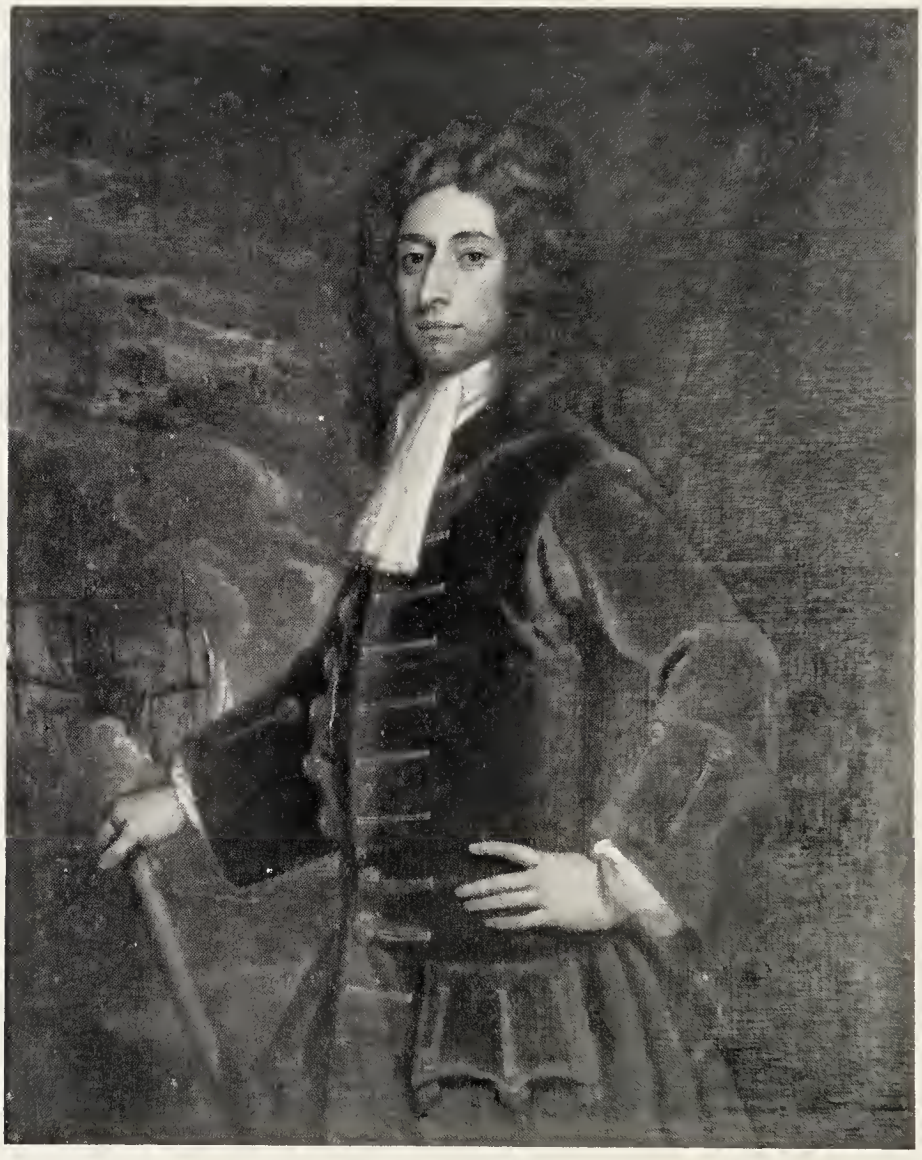

ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE BYNG FIRST VISCOUNT TORRINGTON
from the portrait by SIR GODFREY KNELLER
in the possession of the EARL OF STRAFFORD
at Wrotham Park, Barnet.

The Byng Papers

SELECTED FROM THE

LETTERS AND PAPERS

OF

ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE BYNG

FIRST VISCOUNT TORRINGTON

AND OF HIS SON

ADMIRAL THE HON. JOHN BYNG

AND EDITED BY

BRIAN TUNSTALL

VOL. II

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INTRODUCTION

I

On 26th January, 1708, Vice-Admiral Sir George Byng was advanced to the rank of Admiral of the Blue, and next day attained the age of forty-five. Apart from Sir John Leake, the senior officer on the active list, he was now the most considerable man in the Navy. Death and disgrace had swept almost all professional rivals from his path. Sir Clowdisley Shovell had died as a result of the loss of the Association on 22nd October, 1707, and Byng had escaped a like fate by a miracle. Basil Beaumont had been drowned in 1703, Graydon and Whetstone had been dismissed through prejudice and intrigue. Sir Thomas Dilkes, Byng's immediate junior in rank and four years his junior in age, had died at Leghorn in 1707, and Byng was now in the remarkable position of being younger than either of his two immediate and surviving juniors, Sir John Jennings and Sir John Norris.

Shovell's death was of course the reason for Byng's most recent advancement, but even this had not come about automatically, for the last letter printed in Volume I contains a very stiff demand to Lord Godolphin for the promotion of 'the officers that serve and do the duty of the Fleet.'

From this letter it appears that Byng had reason to think that he and Leake would be made to command the principal divisions of the Fleet in 1708 and yet be kept in the rank of vice-admirals. In this unwarranted subjection he chose to see the hand of George Churchill. As a result of a general promotion in January 1708, however, Leake and Byng both became full admirals. As Byng had foreseen, Leake was allotted the most important command for the year, that of the Mediterranean, while he himself commanded the largest force in home waters.

The papers printed in this volume illustrate Byng's activities as an independent commander during the years 1708 and 1709, and comprise his operations against the French and Jacobites, January–April 1708, his combined operations in home waters, May–September, his voyage to Lisbon and exercise of the command there, September–December, and his operations in the Mediterranean during the year 1709.

At the beginning of 1708 the issue of the War of the Spanish Succession was just as doubtful as it had been at its start. The Allies were successfully resisting all attempts by the French to master the Spanish Netherlands, Vienna was no longer in danger, Gibraltar was strongly garrisoned and the French were suffering severely from naval restrictions on their Mediterranean commerce. On the other hand the allied combined operations against Toulon in 1707 had been a complete failure, and the Archduke Charles was no nearer becoming effective King of Spain

than before, in fact he had lost ground badly since Almanza and was practically confined to Catalonia. Marlborough still exercised undisputed sway over British strategy, both by land and sea, and still had considerable influence over the other allied commanders, but he was finding it increasingly difficult to determine on profitable objectives for attack which held out any hopes of being attainable, and the whole war was fast drifting towards a position of stalemate.

At this stage the French seized the initiative and determined to invade Scotland from Dunkirk on behalf of the exiled James III, commonly called the Old Pretender. They were encouraged in this scheme by exaggerated accounts that had reached them of the unpopularity of the Act of Union between Scotland and England and the great revival of Jacobite feeling which it had occasioned. To assist a claimant of your enemy's throne in the hopes that the civil population will welcome his appearance is always a tempting proposition in war, but the history of such enterprises shows that more often than not the element of foreign help has counterbalanced the element of dynastic enthusiasm and that the result has been a great accession of strength to the *de facto* Government. Don Antonio with English help failed to shake the Spanish hold on Portugal in 1589; the First Coalition against Revolutionary France by supporting the Bourbons enabled the Committee of Public Safety in 1793 to develop from a particularistic terrorist organisation into an instrument of national defence

against foreigners and renegades; while the outlying provinces of the Russian Empire in 1919 preferred the hope of autonomy under the Bolsheviks to the certainty of repression under the Romanoffs. The same argument applies to the various attempts of the Jacobites, which despite lavish manifestos[1] proclaiming religious toleration and constitutional guarantees, were so tinged with French influence that they were never successful except in Scotland, and there only temporarily.

In the spring of 1708, when the English Cabinet had to meet the first of these attempts, it acted with the utmost vigour and confidence. A blockading force was concentrated off Dunkirk in a commendably short space of time, troops were held in readiness at Ostend to follow the invaders and to land wherever they landed, and hundreds of prominent Scotsmen, suspected of disaffection, were instantly arrested. On the naval side the credit for the effective defensive measures must be given to Marlborough and his brother, George Churchill, working in close combination with Lord Sunderland, Marlborough's son-in-law and the Queen's Secretary of State. Prince George of Denmark was still Lord High Admiral and in January 1708 his council consisted of

Sir David Mitchell,
George Churchill,
Richard Hill,
Henry Paget,
Robert Walpole,
Sir Stafford Fairborne.

[1] See *Stuart Papers*, vol. i. Hist. MSS. Com., pp. 218–21, in which a general amnesty is also promised subject to certain conditions.

Presumably the Cabinet had been expecting some kind of Franco-Jacobite attempt at invasion ever since 1701, when Louis XIV broke the Treaty of Ryswick by acknowledging the *de jure* kingship of the house of Stuart, but it is one thing to expect an attack and another thing entirely to be able to meet it at the attackers' selected moment. Parliament received its first official information of the intended invasion on 4th March and both Houses immediately presented addresses to the Queen praying her 'to take immediate care for the apprehending and securing all such as Her Majesty shall suspect of designing to join with the French.'

The earnest and enthusiastic terms in which these addresses were couched and the practical unanimity with which they were voted must have gone far to discredit any stories circulating in Europe of English disaffection, and were triumphantly acclaimed and used as convincing propaganda by the English Ministers.[1]

In fact the only criticisms of the British defence really worth considering are those directed against Byng. He was held by many persons of consequence in public affairs to have acted with negligence and even disaffection in that

(1) He allowed Fourbin's expedition to put to sea and to reach Scotland;

(2) He neglected to block up the entrances to Dunkirk Harbour by sinking ships in the fairway, as recommended to him by Lord Godolphin;

[1] See letter from Thomas Hopkins to Byng, pp. 70–1.

(3) He neglected to bring the French fleet properly to action off the coast of Scotland.

As regards the first charge it is quite obvious that no fleet composed entirely of sailing ships could possibly expect to maintain a close blockade of Dunkirk in the months of February and March, when some of the worst weather might be expected. It was not a question of seamanship or determination which was involved, but the sheer impossibility of making large lumps of wood stay in one place, when driven by gales and tides, in spite of the fact that they carried masts and sails and anchors. Winds from the north would prevent ships from leaving Dunkirk ; winds from the south or west would enable a blockading force, based on the Downs, to keep touch with them if they escaped ; but winds from the east or north-east might enable the enemy to escape and yet would drive the blockading force miles to leeward and prevent it weathering the North Foreland or even Dungeness. It was in such a wind that Fourbin escaped.

Godolphin's scheme for blocking up the entrances to Dunkirk Harbour, by sinking ships in the fairway full of ballast, raises rather a different question. Byng's letter to Godolphin and the opinion of his pilots and of his council of war seem to form a sufficient answer to the charge. They pointed out that the operation would be extremely difficult to execute, and that even then it would probably be quite ineffective as a means of stopping the enemy using the harbour. Undoubtedly there would be opposition by the

enemy's light craft to such an attempt and more especially by their galleys, against which Byng would be unable to develop any covering fire from his large and deep-drafted ships. The tides too presented an added difficulty. We know something of the part they played in the planning of the Zeebrugge Raid during the Great War, and yet Byng's fleet was far more subservient to their influence, being entirely propelled by sail. The blocking operation would undoubtedly have required the most delicate hydrographical calculations in its planning, which might have been discounted at the very last minute by a sudden change of wind or weather. A similar scheme was suggested in 1694, but the pilots declared that it was impracticable, and in May 1708 Rear-Admiral Baker expressed the same opinion.

It would be interesting to know something more of Captain Elkins, or Ekins, who took it upon himself to give technical advice to Godolphin. Alexander Ekins was Master of the Warspight when Sir Stafford Fairborne commanded her in 1690, and was First Lieutenant to Leake in the Prince George in 1705.[1] Presumably this was the same man.

The third charge against Byng is the easiest of all to dispose of, provided that we can accept his very reasonable statement to the effect that Fourbin's ships were clean while his own were foul. Most of Byng's ships were undergoing some kind of refitting when first named for the Dunkirk blockade, but in many cases this probably did

[1] Information from Lieut.-Commander J. H. Owen.

not include cleaning, while Fourbin's ships were the pick of the fast Dunkirk privateers and frigates specially chosen and cleaned for the expedition.

It was also suggested that, quite apart from any question of relative speeds, Byng acted too cautiously when he first sighted the enemy and that he allowed himself to be bluffed by Fourbin's feint at bearing down to attack which enabled the French to weather a promontory and so to escape.

There seems to be very little hope of getting at the truth of these vague tactical criticisms, and the fact that Byng's prompt appearance in the Firth of Forth ruined Fourbin's plans seems a sufficient answer to the charge. In fact there would be little point in discussing it, except that Sir John Leake's eighteenth-century biographer suggests that Byng allowed the Pretender to escape by the private orders of Queen Anne. Certainly he might have proved an embarrassing prisoner.

On the other hand it is unlikely that any great harm would have resulted even if he had landed. He had only just recovered from an attack of measles, which had developed while he was at Dunkirk, and he was apparently sea-sick on the voyage, so that it is unlikely that he would have been able to present a sufficiently impressive and virile figure to charm the hearts of his doubting countrymen. The French did not make the mistake of coming to Scotland as would-be conquerors, on the contrary they treated the boats they met with marked friendliness and discretion, but they must have been profoundly

disappointed at the lack of enthusiasm which James III's presence on the coast aroused. Despite many statements emphasising the disaffected condition of the country at the moment and Lord Leven's grave assertion of his inability to meet a rebellion if it arose, it is clear that the Scots were by no means prepared to rebel and that the English Cabinet judged the situation rightly.

II

During the spring and summer of 1708 several changes took place in the composition of Prince George of Denmark's naval council. The Cabinet had little to fear in the way of criticisms of its conduct of the operations against Fourbin and the Pretender, such agitation as there was being entirely of a factious order. The papers dealing with the campaign were certainly laid before the House of Lords for discussion, but they were only called for in January 1709.

Nevertheless Godolphin's and Marlborough's dominance was being gradually undermined through a series of causes which are hardly within the scope of the present introduction, and no doubt they were both anxious to make appointments which would strengthen the Admiralty's general capacity or which would also placate the merchants, who continually asserted that their trade was not being properly protected. The real cause of the changes in the naval council, however, was due to Marlborough removing Robert Walpole from it and making him Secretary at

War. It therefore became difficult to find a civilian who was sufficiently a man of business to fill his place. In consequence, a general change took place; Sir David Mitchell and Sir Stafford Fairborne resigned, whether voluntarily or from pressure it is difficult to say, and this meant that at least two sea officers must be chosen to fill their places.

The Ministers then arranged for Sir John Leake to be appointed to the naval council, but as he had already sailed to the Mediterranean before the appointment was made it was obvious that the council could not have the benefit of his advice for some considerable time. Leake's eighteenth-century biographer remarks that not only was this appointment his due, but that it was 'even necessary at that time to give a sanction to their [the council's] proceedings.'[1] As there was no precedent for the existence of the Prince's naval council in any case, this remark is open to criticism, but from the precedent set by Shovell's retaining his seat at the council in 1707 while in the Mediterranean it seems reasonable that Leake should have succeeded him. The Ministers then approached Byng and Jennings with offers to join the council also, presumably in the places of Mitchell and Fairborne. These offers were flattering and tempting, and undoubtedly represented a desire on the Churchills' part to seek an accommodation with the two most prominent flag-officers, next to Leake, one of whom, Byng, was also their most outstanding service critic.

[1] *Life of Sir John Leake* (N.R.S.), vol. ii. pp. 307–8.

Doubtless, however, there was another side to these offers, and Byng and Jennings, rightly or wrongly, seem to have considered that by joining the council they would compromise their own independent position and at the same time would be unable to enforce the acceptance of their own naval policy. From his letter to Byng of 26th June Godolphin clearly deprecated this attitude, but either from sincerity or artfulness he appeared to be in some sympathy with the intransigents and contented himself with a mild scolding and the promise of his good offices in the future.

Eventually the Prince's naval council was completed by the appointments of Lord Wemyss, Admiral Sir James Wishart, and Rear-Admiral Robert Fairfax. David, third Earl of Wemyss, had been High Admiral of Scotland before the Union, in which he took a prominent part, being one of the Commissioners appointed to arrange it, and afterwards a representative peer. Wishart, although junior to Byng, had been recently appointed a supernumerary admiral of the blue, and Fairfax, who had recently resigned his commission in consequence of having his promotion to vice-admiral cancelled in favour of Lord Dursley, was now brought back into favour through the instrumentality of George Churchill.

III

After a short stay in London following his return from the Scottish coast, Byng resumed

his position as commander-in-chief at Portsmouth, and on 7th May he was ordered to sea with a powerful fleet. His duties were to watch Brest and particularly to prevent any ships from Dunkirk getting in there. He was also to protect trade and keep down enemy privateers. In other words, he was given what was soon to be established as the familiar rôle of commander-in-chief of the 'Western Squadron.' The maintenance of this force at high strength and in good repair was to become a cardinal feature in all our maritime strategy against France.

The Western Squadron was able to blockade or observe the chief French base in the Atlantic and at the same time to protect the mass of British and Dutch shipping passing the focal of the English Channel. In this way a great economy of force was effected, since the ships which cruised off Brest were also able to provide the single ships or small squadrons necessary to see the trade out from Plymouth and Portsmouth and back again. Owing to the fact that the enemy's attacks on trade were made almost entirely with fast frigates and privateers, the standard of repair which the Western Squadron maintained was of the utmost importance, as otherwise it was impossible for it to catch the raiders. Hence, Lord Dursley's letter of 29th June complaining of his ill luck owing to the foulness of his ships is particularly interesting.

Towards the end of June Byng began to receive various instructions relative to combined operations on the French north coast in company

with Lieutenant-General Thomas Erle. These operations kept him busy till the middle of September, and although they achieved very little success they are of considerable interest. I have commented fairly fully on them in an accompanying Introductory Note, but there are some broader and more general considerations which naturally arise out of them.

In the first place it is quite clear that Marlborough's failure to co-operate with Byng and Erle in seizing Abbeville was entirely due to the restrictions placed on his daring strategy by the jealousy and timidity of his Dutch and Imperial allies. Thus, the expedition was eventually limited to the purely subsidiary rôle of being a diversion, intended to draw French troops west for the defence of Normandy and Brittany.

Then as regards the operations either planned or attempted, there seems to have been a certain lack of preliminary staff work and reconnaissance, which necessitated last-minute councils of war, thus wasting time and producing a feeling unfavourable to offensive action. Byng certainly made a preliminary survey of available landing places before he sailed, as witnessed by the opinion of the pilots given on 25th July and the subsequent council of war. As both these bodies, however, were dubious about making any landing at all, an idea of vagueness appears to have settled on the expedition and never to have left it. No attempt seems to have been made to reconnoitre the most suitable places with frigates, which could have brought back first-hand reports of the

enemy's defensive preparations. Of course, the commanders can easily be excused any lack of initiative on the grounds that their instructions kept altering in such a bewildering fashion that they never quite knew what precisely was expected of them. Clearly, however, they must avoid at all costs the disaster which would follow supposing the troops, having landed, were hard pressed by a superior force and could not be withdrawn owing to the ships being in difficulties. Erle was a very experienced soldier, much trusted by Marlborough, and had commanded the allied centre at Almanza, under Lord Galway. He was only fifty-eight at the time of these operations and was of great service to Marlborough when his troops were subsequently landed at Ostend. No one could pretend that he was a senile veteran at this time, despite the fact that he was seriously troubled by gout. Comparing these operations with similar ones both before and after, in the war of the English Succession and in the Seven Years' War, it seems reasonable to conclude that Byng and Erle did all that could be expected of them.

These operations are also interesting for the light they throw on the conduct of combined operations by the Principal Secretaries of State. It is sometimes assumed that Chatham was the first Minister to exercise control over combined operations in this way, but it is clear that whenever such operations were contemplated difficulties were bound to arise between the Admiralty and the War Office, which could only be settled by the

personal intervention of a Minister having the right to give orders in the name of the Crown. Even in the correspondence dealing with the operations against Fourbin there are several cases of the Admiralty submitting drafts of their instructions to Lord Sunderland for his approval, which show the control exercised by the Secretaries of State over purely naval matters.

IV

Byng's next enterprise was his voyage to Lisbon in the autumn of 1708 with the Queen of Portugal, preparatory to assuming the command in chief in the Mediterranean next year. The new King of Portugal, John V, who succeeded in 1706, had married a daughter of the Emperor Joseph I, and it was therefore a matter of some difficulty and importance to get her to Lisbon without being captured by the French privateers which infested both the Channel and the Mediterranean.

Meanwhile the whole future of the war in the Mediterranean depended on the result of Leake and Stanhope's joint attack on Minorca, which resulted in the complete surrender of the whole island. Stanhope's despatch, a copy of which Byng received from Sunderland, is, despite its gross omission of all reference to Leake and Whitaker, a masterly and triumphant State paper. It shows Stanhope to have been perfectly acquainted with the prime necessities of naval warfare and as anticipating to the full the far-reaching strategic and diplomatic results which his conquest would

have on Britain, Britain's allies, Britain's enemies, and the Minorquins. With regard to the last named his remarks should be studied with reference to our failure to produce real co-operation, despite the apparent docility of the Minorquins under Kane's prosperous rule. Indeed, every prophecy in Stanhope's despatch, and there are many, should be compared with the tragic results of 1756 and 1782. Forty-eight years after Byng first received the news of Leake's and Stanhope's capture, John Byng, his own son, lay a prisoner at Greenwich, waiting his trial for failure to relieve the island.

To no single person engaged in the conduct of the war on either side was the significance of the capture of Minorca more apparent than to Marlborough. For months he had been urging on the Allies the necessity of a winter base for the Anglo-Dutch fleet inside the Straits, Gibraltar without its modern works being too much exposed to westerly gales. 'The "grand article" for the fleet that is to winter in the Mediterranean is surmounted, God be thanked, by the capture of Minorca,' he wrote to Sinzendorff, the Imperial Minister, on $\frac{16}{27}$ December, 1708.

Thereafter his efforts were bent entirely towards two objects, firstly to exploit the capture as vigorously as possible, and secondly to ensure that Minorca should remain permanently in British hands. 'The resigning of that island to us must be of great advantage to our trade in all respects,' he wrote to Stanhope on $\frac{15}{26}$ January, 1709, 'but it is a very ticklish point, and will need our greatest

prudence in the management of it.' Incidentally, it was our naval allies, the Dutch, who perhaps most of all were opposed to its permanent cession.

In order therefore to carry out Marlborough's first object as quickly as possible, Byng received instructions on 13th November, while at Lisbon, to proceed at once to Port Mahon with practically every ship available. On 27th December he sailed, and the first stage of the development of Port Mahon as a naval base had begun.

Meanwhile an event of far-reaching naval consequence had occurred in the shape of the death of Prince George of Denmark on 28th October, and a month afterwards his naval council was dissolved and Lord Pembroke was appointed Lord High Admiral. Although he had been at the head of the Admiralty twice before, Pembroke showed some signs of diffidence and would have been glad of the help of a council similar to Prince George's. Leake's biographer, however, suggests that this council never had proper constitutional authority, and that its existence was winked at out of respect to the Queen. Indeed, the Prince's whole position seems to have been a unique one, seeing that he was given the title of Lord High Admiral and also of Generalissimo, in order to make him superior to Marlborough. His death, however, made little difference at first to the conduct of the war in the Mediterranean, since he had issued, just before he died, his main instructions to Byng for going to Port Mahon.

The conditions of the war in the Mediterranean

were fast approaching a stalemate. The Anglo-Dutch fleet was supreme at sea, the French scarcely attempting any important operation whatever and keeping their large ships confined to Toulon, while they scattered privateers broadcast over the trade routes. Charles III, on the other hand, was confined almost entirely to Catalonia, and had little hope of ever gaining the goodwill and acceptance of the other Spanish provinces. Both sides were finding the greatest difficulty in obtaining supplies of food, and this problem was now beginning to affect France as well, so that all Western Europe lay paralysed by lack of means to continue this terrible and, in a sense, purposeless war, which if continued could only make the situation of the belligerents still worse.

Some initiative, however, still lay with the Anglo-Dutch fleet, which, with Port Mahon as a base, was in a splendid position for protecting Charles's supplies of corn from North Africa while preventing them reaching the South of France.

Moreover, there was the fortress of Alicante in Valencia which, under Major-General John Richards, was still making a magnificent resistance. Richards, it will be remembered, had been apprehensive of being attacked soon after the allied defeat at Almanza in 1707, and had carried on an important correspondence with Byng relative to putting Alicante in a good state of defence (see 'The Byng Papers,' Vol. I, pp. 138–40, 163, 168–80).

Byng's first object when he entered the Mediterranean in January 1709 was to relieve Richards, but he was unable to start from Port Mahon till March. Meanwhile Richards had had to surrender the town and retire to the castle, which he had every hope of being able to hold till relieved. But d'Asfeld, the enemy commander, was a man of no ordinary ability. With exceptional energy he drove a galley under the rock on which the castle stood and filled it with 117,000 lb. of gunpowder. D'Asfeld then invited Richards to send officers to inspect the mine with a view to persuading him to surrender. Richards sent two officers under a flag of truce, who reported that the mine was as formidable as the enemy alleged. But Richards, trusting to clefts in the rock and to a countershaft sunk by his own engineers from inside, both of which he hoped would lessen the shock, refused to surrender. D'Asfeld, after repeated summonses, announced the time for firing the mine as 6 A.M. on 20th February.

The part of the defences directly above it was so exposed to attack that the guard of thirty men always on duty there could not be withdrawn even at the last moment, in case the enemy made an assault instead of firing the mine. Richards, therefore, accompanied by several of his officers who were off duty at the moment, took his stand with the guard immediately over the mine in order to encourage the garrison. Exactly at six the mine exploded, and the whole plateau on which the defences rested was split by long fissures, which closed again immediately, swallowing up

and crushing to death Richards, Colonel Sybourg, ten other officers, and over forty men.

Lieutenant-Colonel d'Albon continued the defence, but it was extremely humiliating to the Allies that after this magnificent though quixotic act of heroism all that Byng and Stanhope could do when they arrived was to embark the garrison with the honours of war. Colonel Parnell criticises them very strongly for not attempting the relief sooner, and for failing to compel d'Asfeld to raise the siege when they arrived.

These are the natural sentiments of a keen military historian who, having corrected so many errors in the estimation of various land commanders, was tempted with less knowledge of the general conditions to do the same for those who commanded by sea.

V

Byng's chief occupation for the rest of the year consisted in maintaining and protecting the supplies of food going to Barcelona and in doing everything possible to ruin the commerce of the enemy. No attempt was made to attack the enemy's main forces, because the enemy had no main forces at sea. The situation was akin to that of the Napoleonic war after Trafalgar and the Great War after Jutland. Nevertheless, Byng's assistance to Charles III was of a very important nature, since it enabled the Allies to keep their claimant in possession of Catalonia. Had there been no Anglo-Dutch fleet to ensure the safety of his supplies, Charles might easily have had to withdraw from Spain altogether, which would

have made his support by the Allies an even more futile business than it was already. With the French weary and discouraged, Catalonia was in the last resort a good article to bargain with, since the Imperialists could always claim substantial compensation for Charles elsewhere, supposing that he was willing to surrender his one Spanish area of effective control.

Byng reached home from the Mediterranean on 25th September, leaving Sir Edward Whitaker in command, and very shortly afterwards Lord Pembroke resigned the office of Lord High Admiral, having acted for about one year, apparently with considerable disinclination. On 8th November, 1709, the Queen appointed a Board of Commissioners to execute the Lord High Admiral's office, and Edward Russell, Earl of Orford, Byng's former admiral, friend and patron, was named First Lord. With him were Byng himself, Sir John Leake, George Dodington and Paul Methuen. After thirty-one years of service at sea, of which only six had been spent as a flag officer, Byng had reached one of the highest professional positions open to a naval officer.

In preparing this, the second volume of his papers, for publication, I have felt justified in extending the scope of the Introductory Notes and in adding certain material from other sources, so as to give a clearer idea of his activities as a commander-in-chief. The Society is particularly indebted to Lord Strafford for his kindness in having had the bulk of the papers in this volume specially typewritten. I am also deeply indebted

to him for assistance in the work of editing and for allowing me to reproduce the portrait of Lord Torrington by Kneller at Wrotham Park, which forms the frontispiece to this volume. It is difficult to determine whether this portrait or the one now hanging in the Painted Hall at Greenwich and reproduced in Volume I was painted first. It is quite possible that both were done from the same original sketch.

I must again thank Professor Callender for his constant encouragement and for his advice on innumerable matters, without which I should have found it impossible to complete the volume satisfactorily. Lieutenant-Commander J. H. Owen has read through the text and has also provided me with much additional material, some of which I have included in the main text, notably the letters from Byng to Whitaker in 1709. He has also given me a series of extracts from Marlborough's despatches bearing on the intended invasion of Scotland in 1708. I must thank Mr. Bonner Smith, Deputy Admiralty Librarian, for information, most of which will be included in a subsequent volume, and also Miss H. R. Francis for typing some of the papers in this volume and for her help in arranging the business of publication.

This volume will be the first which has been published by the Society for eighteen years which has not been edited or supervised by Mr. W. G. Perrin, and I take this opportunity of paying my tribute to him as a friend, a mentor, and a national figure.

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LORD TORRINGTON . . . . . *Frontispiece*

From the portrait by Sir Godfrey Kneller at Wrotham Park, Barnet.

PART I

Jan.-April 1708

THE INTENDED INVASION OF SCOTLAND

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THE part played by Byng in preventing the Franco-Jacobite invasion of Scotland in the spring of 1708 was so important that I have felt justified in including with those of his papers which illustrate it a considerable amount of additional material. This has been obtained chiefly from the House of Lords MSS., vols. vii and viii, published by the Historical Manuscripts Commission, the references to which are given in shortened form, *i.e.* viii. 250, etc., indicating volume and page, without any further explanation. Lieutenant-Commander J. H. Owen has in addition supplied me with several items from the Admiralty Records, Domestic State Papers, and from Marlborough's Despatches, which are particularly useful as checks on the rather unsatisfactory editing of the House of Lords MSS. and for showing the part played by Marlborough in what from our point of view as well as from that of the French was an extensive combined operation.

Many of the papers in the Byng collection also appear in the House of Lords collection, but as in most cases they provide the original and therefore more reliable version, I have had no hesitation in printing them, especially as the printed version of the House of Lords MSS. leaves something to be desired. The papers in the Byng collection which, so far as I know, have no duplicate versions in print are Sir George Byng's 'Journal,' followed by a much fuller narrative of 'Proceedings,' and his correspondence with Lords Leven and Godolphin and with Rear-Admiral Baker, together with some miscellaneous letters from Thomas Hopkins.

The form in which the narrative of 'Proceedings' is

written shows that he looked upon it as a formal defence of his conduct, supposing that this should be the subject of an official inquiry either on the grounds of disaffection or of neglect of duty. The same remark also applies to the copy of his letters to and from Godolphin on the subject of blocking the channels of Dunkirk, accompanied by the pilots' and council of war's opinions.

The intelligence which the Government had of the intended invasion project was early and accurate. As far back as $\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{2}$ December, 1707, they were being told that Fourbin was to command fourteen ships at Dunkirk (viii. 50), and by 1st January, 1708, that some thirty ships of various descriptions stationed on the west coast of France were also destined for Dunkirk (viii. 50–1). By 9th January most of these ships were said to be concentrated at Brest, but other information seemed to indicate that part of this force would go to the West Indies under le Marquis de Coetlogon, while another part under Du Guay-Trouin would cruise in the Atlantic to intercept our trade and to take charge of the returning Spanish galleons (viii. 51–2). Evidently there was great activity going on at Dunkirk, seamen being sought for from as far as Brest and St. Malo and several officers being mentioned as likely commanders in addition to Fourbin (viii. 52). By $\frac{3}{1}\frac{}{4}$ February, however, one of our intelligencers wrote from Dunkirk that Fourbin had arrived there and was fitting out one ship of 60 guns, one of 54, one of 52, four of 50, one of 46, one of 44, one of 40, and two of 36. In addition two large ships of from 60 to 70 guns were also to be got ready. These ships it was stated would be ready ' by next month ' (viii. 52–3).

A letter from Bruges written on $\frac{1}{2}\frac{6}{7}$ February stated that the squadron at Dunkirk consisted of twenty-six ships and that six of them had already gone out to anchor in the road (viii. 53). This letter was certainly in Burchett's hands by 18th February, and although it was followed a few days afterwards by much additional but contradictory information, it is clear that the Government already had enough to go on when Byng received his preliminary orders of 17th February. Two questions however were

still in doubt : firstly, what was Fourbin's objective, and secondly, would he be joined by any ships from Brest ? In a letter dated from Paris on $\frac{1}{12}$ March and in Burchett's hands by the 9th the carrying of the Pretender to Scotland was spoken of as an assumed fact, and the Government never seems to have been in much doubt that this was Fourbin's objective. Moreover, within a few days it was definitely established that the Pretender was at Dunkirk, which put all doubt at an end (vii. 566–8). Meanwhile when once Byng's force was properly concentrated it automatically barred the way against any reinforcements for Dunkirk coming from Brest, and as Godolphin shrewdly remarked in his letter of 29th February : ' I make no question the French will find a way immediately overland to stop the Brest squadron if it were not gone to sea before and out of their reach.'

The campaign itself was a straightforward affair, and can be easily followed from Byng's Journal and narrative of ' Proceedings.' On 17th February he was ordered to go to Portsmouth and with the assistance of Lord Dursley to fit out a squadron lying there and to send it to the Downs as quickly as possible. Captain Hovenden Walker, who had a squadron at Plymouth, about to go on convoy duty to Lisbon, was also ordered to join Byng at Portsmouth. Rear-Admiral Baker was to take such ships as were ready from the Medway and the Nore and to establish a patrol off Dunkirk, where he was to be followed by Jennings with the rest of the ships lying in the Thames. Meanwhile Captain Maine was ordered to keep a watch on Dunkirk with the Nightingale till these forces arrived. Finally four more ships were to be sent to the Downs from the east coast.

Certainly the Ministers were acting with vigour, for, despite the usual difficulties in manning and fitting out the ships quickly, Baker actually sailed from the Thames on 20th February with twelve ships. Three days later Jennings, travelling overland on horseback, reached Deal to take over the command from Baker, and by midnight on 25th February Byng himself had arrived in the Downs to command in chief, in consequence of the

Prince's orders of the 22nd. He and Dursley had only reached Portsmouth on the 19th, and in six days he had drawn up a complete scheme for the defence of the harbour and dockyard, arranged for Dursley's movements in case of an immediate attack, and had got to the Downs with six ships, making with those already there a total of 24[1] and a fireship. Only four of these were 'ships of weight,' but nevertheless the Ministers had effected a concentration strong enough to cause severe damage to any ordinary force putting to sea with troops in transports, and the campaign was already as good as won.

On 26th February the flag officers at a council of war decided to go over to Dunkirk and to find out exactly what kind of opposition they would have to face, for despite efforts by Maine and Jennings little detailed information had so far been obtained. The whole fleet therefore went over to Graveline Pits and anchored there on 27th February. Byng carried out a personal reconnaissance by which he discovered that although the enemy had twenty-seven ships in the road they were of inferior force to his own. Having cruised off Dunkirk for a day, he took the fleet back to Graveline Pits for shelter, owing to heavy south-west winds and in order to be able to intercept any enemy ships coming to Dunkirk from Brest. On 1st March, however, his council of war decided that in consequence of the wind being more westerly it would be best to return to the Downs, leaving a chain of scouts from Dunkirk to give warning if the enemy came out. This decision was arrived at on the assumption that the only way of sealing up the Flemish Road would be to cruise in a much too exposed position, and that in any case the enemy could not come out till the next spring tide unless they came out at once. Moreover the fleet, having been got together hurriedly, was in need of provisions, water, and stores (Burchett). The return to the Downs was quite well received in London, although there is a hint of anxiety in Byng's quotations from letters in his narrative showing the Ministers' formal approval.

[1] The editors of the *House of Lords MSS.* in their introduction to vol. viii wrongly state the number to be 26.

On 5th March Walker, with eight ships plus the Bedford, arrived from Plymouth via Portsmouth, having been held up by the recent south-west wind. Byng on this held another council of war, at which it was decided to stay in the Downs till the 8th and then to go over to Graveline Pits and to patrol off Dunkirk with the main body, while detaching a small force which was to cruise in the mouth of the Channel and give warning of any ships coming from Brest. This scheme was not so well received in London, where the Ministers showed an obvious desire to get Byng out of the Downs at once, especially as advices about the Pretender's arrival at Dunkirk and his designs on Scotland were pouring in by every express. Godolphin too was probably a little disappointed at Byng's unwillingness to adopt his scheme for blocking up Dunkirk harbour, and with so much anxiety being manifested in high quarters Byng might well have been in some doubt as to whether or not to cut short his stay in the Downs, had he known what the Ministers were thinking.

The question, however, was decided for him by his scouts on the morning of 6th March reporting some enemy ships at sea. Byng immediately chased them with his whole force, thinking they were ships coming from Brest, but they got away safely and afterwards turned out only to have been privateers. Consequently Burchett's letter (prompted by Sunderland), hinting that he should get to sea at once, did not reach him till 8th March, by which time he had been to sea off Dunkirk, had anchored off Dover on the night of the 6th, and had then been driven right back to Dungeness again on the 7th by an E.N.E. gale.

It was just while putting to sea on the 6th that he seems to have learnt for the first time through Captain King, General Cadogan's A.D.C., of the project for countering the invasion scheme by sending ten battalions of troops from Ostend, which were to be landed at whatever point on the English or Scottish coast seemed most favourable. The advantage of this scheme lay in the fact that the troops need not be diverted from their duties in the Netherlands, unless the enemy's troops

actually sailed. Moreover, by bringing our troops direct by sea they could be concentrated on the exact point of the coast required, thereby avoiding marching small bodies of troops from all over England and Scotland to some rendezvous which might easily have to be altered at the last moment. The only danger lay in the possibility that the enemy might meet the troops at sea, since, even with Dutch assistance, any force which Byng might detach for their protection would still be inferior to the total force under Fourbin.

Meanwhile Byng was clear of Dungeness again by 8th March, and on the morning of the 9th he was off Dunkirk, anxious lest the enemy should have sailed on the top of the tide, his latest intelligence being Captain Canning's report that on 6th March they were still at anchor in the same position. But at 1 P.M. an advice boat met the fleet with a letter from Captain King of 7th March,[1] stating that the enemy had left Dunkirk on the night of the 6th, and were, at the time of writing, lying in Nieuport Pits. The captain of the boat informed Byng, however, that he had lain near them the previous night, but that by dawn they had disappeared and must therefore have sailed. Burchett's suspicion in his letter of 8th March that the enemy intended to ' sail northward with the very first opportunity of a wind ' was clearly justified.

Byng at once held a council of war, which decided to leave Baker with seven English and four Dutch ships to collect Cadogan's troops and to take the thirty-two ships and one fireship to the Forth. ' I can only say more could not be done than we have done,' wrote Byng to Burchett, when enclosing the council's opinion.

The news about Fourbin proved correct in every detail. He had sailed from Flemish Road at night on 6th March [2] with twenty-six ships and a north-westerly wind, but had been forced into Nieuport Pits on the 7th by the

[1] See Byng's narrative of ' Proceedings,' page 32.

[2] The editors of the *House of Lords MSS.*, vol. viii., are again at fault in implying by the phrase ' two days previously ' that Fourbin sailed on the 7th.

same E.N.E. gale which drove Byng back to the Downs. On the night of the 8th, however, he once more got clear and headed north for Scotland. His task required good seamanship and uncommon tact, for not only had he got to land the Pretender's forces on a difficult coast without interference from Byng, but he was also responsible for maintaining good relations between the various national groups which his ships carried. The troops under le Comte de Gassé consisted of detachments from fifteen different battalions, amounting to only 5,000 men in all. The bulk of them were French, but there was also a strong contingent of Irish, Scots and English, both among the troops and crews. Fourbin's first mistake was that he ran too far north and made his landfall on 12th March at Montrose instead of the Forth. After communicating with the shore he headed south and entered the Firth of Forth the same evening.

Byng meanwhile had only left his position off Dunkirk on the afternoon of the 9th, and was therefore at least twelve hours behind, but by dint of hugging the coast as he approached Northumberland he managed to reach St. Abbs' Head on the afternoon of 12th March and sighted the Isle of May lighthouse the same night. All the way north he had encountered westerly gales with rain and snow, which must have made his task very difficult, but which at the same time removed the danger of his being driven on a lee shore, supposing that he stood in too close. Having sent an officer to the island for intelligence he anchored for the night three leagues to the south of it, not knowing that the French had anchored just to the north of it.

Next morning at daybreak both fleets were visible to each other and Byng immediately crowded sail and chased to the north, with the wind at W.S.W. He had thirty-two ships and a fireship and was so superior in force and numbers that Fourbin had no choice but to get out to sea as quickly as possible. It was stated that Fourbin had sufficient coolness to steer towards Byng at first as if to engage him, really in order to get clear of a cape, and that having gained his object and made Byng

ease up in order to form line of battle he then made off to the north. This may be true, for the Mayor of Berwick's intelligence certainly states that the French were heading south until 8 A.M.[1]

Fourbin now had the advantage, because all his ships were clean and fresh out from Dunkirk—in fact, they represented the pick of that port's famous speedy frigates and privateers. Byng watched them gradually draw away and sat down to write to Burchett, 'they have this advantage of us, that their ships are clean and most of ours are foul.' Nevertheless, towards the afternoon the Dover and the Ludlow Castle got near enough to open fire on the enemy's rear, and ignoring the privateers worked their way up and engaged the enemy's larger ships, including the Salisbury. The early spring night was, however, already setting in, and Fourbin made good his escape, as he was almost bound to do, only the Salisbury remaining in sight and being eventually taken at 2 A.M. next morning.

When day broke on 14th March only part of the enemy's ships could be seen from the masthead, and Byng having consulted his flag officers[2] lay to all that day and returned to the Forth on 15th March. He feared that if he chased further to the north the enemy might double back and land their troops at Leith, and he would then be incapable of stopping them, since with the wind at south-west he would be a long way to leeward.

After this the critical part of the campaign was at an end, and interest centres chiefly on Byng's appreciation of what Fourbin was doing and on the troubles experienced by the unfortunate Baker and his convoy of troops. For Byng it was merely a question of whether he should cruise off Buchan Ness or remain in the Forth, or return to the Downs. Naturally everyone concerned was extremely disappointed at the enemy not being brought to a general action, but nowhere in the correspondence is there any hint of Byng's zeal being in doubt. Neverthe-

[1] See Lediard, pp. 828–9.

[2] See his narrative of 'Proceedings.' No other record seems to exist of this council of war.

less, it was, so to speak, his second failure, as easily to be accounted for amongst seamen as his first, namely his failure to stop the enemy leaving Dunkirk, but naturally a difficult business for the understanding of suspicious landsmen. Evidently Byng kept and arranged his papers with a view to answering any attack on his conduct, and it is therefore extremely interesting to observe that he took special care to arrange the material connected with a possible third line of assault, his failure to carry out or even to attempt Godolphin's scheme for blocking the entrances to Dunkirk Harbour.

Whether more could have been done to intercept Fourbin on his return is another criticism which may be made of the general conduct of the campaign. But this has nothing to do with Byng, who remained tied to the Scottish coast till 3rd April, when he received the Prince's orders of 30th March to return to the Downs. With these came a most reassuring letter from Burchett, begging him to be under no uneasiness in consequence of ' the rumours and reflections of the town.'

Fourbin meanwhile re-entered Dunkirk on 25th March with twenty-four of his ships,[1] Captain Griffith with his intercepting force of fourteen feeling that he was not justified in attacking. Byng reached the Downs on 16th April and the campaign was officially at an end.

On 29th May Baker, writing to Burchett, in reply to an order from the Prince of 24th May for taking some ships over to block up the channels of Dunkirk Harbour, said that he thought the scheme impracticable.[2]

Note : The quotations from Marlborough's despatches in this and subsequent sections are from the edition prepared by General Sir George Murray in 1845.

[1] Nine ships apparently left Dunkirk to join him after he first sailed, so that when he returned he was minus ten ships in addition to the Salisbury, supposing these statements to be correct.

[2] Adm. 1/709. P.R.O.

JOURNAL FROM THE 17TH *FEB.* 1707–8 *TO THE* 16TH *APRIL FOLLOWING*

1707/8.

Feb. 17th. Received the Prince's orders for going down to Portsmouth.

18th. Set out from London.

19th. Arrived at Portsmouth.

23rd. Received the Prince's orders for going with the ships from Portsmouth to the Downs.

25th. Arrived in the Downs.

26th. Called the Council of War, and according to the resolutions taken there, weighed with all the men of war and sailed towards Dunkirk.

27th. Anchored in Graveline Pits with the Fleet and went on board the Ludlow Castle, and stood in nearer to Flemish Road, to make a better observation of the ships lying there.

28th. This forenoon weighed with the Fleet, intending to shift roads, and stood on the back side of the sands of Dunkirk, in the fairway of the N.E^{t}. channel, to prevent the enemy's coming out that way, the wind being then at S.S.E. but it presently coming to S.S.W. and looking as if it would blow, for the better security of the squadron, and to lie in the way of the ships from Brest, should they come from the Westward, I returned to an anchor in the Pits.

Feb. 29th. Last night I sent the Ludlow Castle and Gosport to cruise off of Blanc Nez, and between that and Boulogne Bay, to look out for the ships from Brest, and this morning sent the Lark and Cruiser to lie between Calais and Blanc Nez on the same service.

Mar. 1st. It being dirty weather with the wind S.W^{tly}. and looks likely to blow, called a Council of War, and according to the resolutions there taken weighed from Graveline Pits and stood for the Downs. Left 5 Frigates off the North Channel to watch the enemy.

2nd. Anchored in the Downs. Ordered the afore-mentioned cruisers to lie without one another and upon seeing any squadron from Brest to hand the signals to me.

6th. The Lark making the signal of seeing an enemy I immediately got under sail with the fleet, in pursuit of the ships, and left orders for all such ships as should come after me to join me, to proceed to join me off the North Channel of Dunkirk.

7th. At half past six last night it falling calm, anchored between Dover and Calais. The 5 Frigates returned, and brought me account the enemy were still in the road, to the same number as when I first saw them. At ten this morning the windward tide being made, I got under sail, intending to recover the Downs, but

the wind blew so hard at E.N.E. could not fetch it, and standing in for Dover Road, found there ran so great a sea, the wind so far easterly and likely to blow hard, I judged it best for the security of the Squadron to bear away for Dungeness, and at noon anchored there. The Glasgow broke her anchor, and lost a maintopmast.

Mar. 8th. Last night struck yards and topmasts.

9th. Last night at seven the weather beginning to moderate, though the wind was still fresh at E.N.E. made the signal to unmoor to endeavour to tide it to the eastward. At ten weighed as the wind at E.S.E. This day noon an advice boat brought me a letter from Captain King, M. G. Cadogan's Aide de Camp, with notice of the enemy's sailing from Dunkirk, upon which I called a Council of War, and pursuant to the resolutions there taken stood for Edinburgh, leaving R. A. Baker with a squadron to convoy the troops from Ostend.

12th. Made the Cheviot Hills this noon.

13th. Yesterday afternoon at half past two, brought to, to speak with a small sail the Antelope had chased, which proved to be a fishing boat belonging to Lowestoft, but could give no account of the enemy. I immediately dismissed him, and made sail. At eight in the evening the Lighthouse on the Isle of May bore N.W.b.W.

5 leagues. At 11 it being calm, came to an anchor, then the light-house was N.W.b.W. 3 leagues. Sent Captain Hamilton of the Lark in his boat to the Isle of May, to see what he could learn there of the enemy. This morning at the opening of the day saw the enemy's fleet about 4 leagues from us to the northward of the Isle of May, to the number of 26 ships, getting under sail, and some already under sail. Weighed and stood after them, with small gales at W.N.W. At 8 Captain Hamilton returned.

Mar. 14th. Finding this morning the enemy had out-run us a very great way, all but the Salisbury which was taken I called a Council of War, and pursuant to it stood for Edinburgh.

16th. Last night anchored in Leith Road.

17th. Last night the wind coming to the S.W., I called a Council of War, but according to the resolutions there taken was obliged to remain here. Sent the Dover and Ludlow Castle off Buchan Ness and the Rye and Squirrel off Aberdeen to gain intelligence of the enemy.

22nd. Rye and Squirrel returned without seeing anything, but had much ado to escape from the shore in the bad weather they met with.

23rd. Received the Prince's orders for putting to sea to guard the Coast of Scotland, on which I prepared to get under sail.

Mar. 24th. Turned down the Frith.
25th. Ditto.
26th. Ditto.
27th. Returned within the Isle of May, the weather looking very foul.
28th. The weather continuing very bad, returned to Leith Road.
29th. The Dover and Ludlow Castle returned without seeing anything, but received much damage, the Dover having sprung all her masts, and had been forced beyond the Orkneys off of Scotland.
Apl. 3rd. Yesterday afternoon R. A. Baker forced in here with his Squadron, having suffered very much.
4th. Yesterday afternoon received the Prince's orders for going to the Downs.
6th. Weighed out of the Frith.
16th. Came to an anchor in the Downs, [having with him 18 ships, the Salisbury Prize and a fireship].

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FLEET ON THE PRETENDER'S EXPEDITION TO SCOTLAND IN 1708. *FROM SIR G. B. JOURNAL AND LETTERS.*

The Government receiving advice that preparations were making at Dunkirk for an invasion,
1708. it was thought necessary that all ships in sea pay within reach and fit for service should repair to the Downs with all despatch.

Sir George Byng received orders from the Prince

of Denmark, forthwith to repair to Spithead, and take upon him the command of the ships there and in Portsmouth Harbour
Feb. 17. and to despatch away to the Downs those that were now ordered thither ; and he was directed to consider and report to the Prince his opinion, in what manner the ships which would be left in harbour, and the magazines, might be best secured, should the enemy attempt anything on them.

Admiral Baker was sent to Chatham to hasten to the Downs the ships from the Medway, and Sir John Jennings was directed to hasten all those from the Thames, and Captain Walker who commanded a squadron of twelve ships to the Westward was ordered away from Plymouth to St. Helens, to join Sir George Byng.

Sir George Byng on his arrival at Portsmouth (where my Lord Dursley, Vice Admiral of the Blue, arrived the same day) immediately gave directions for fitting out the ships. As they wanted men, he took men out of the transports bound for Ireland, though the Prince's orders were not to take any men out of the ships in public service ; but he considered these transports could have no convoy till the Expedition was over : and he took all the men out of the merchant ships, and sent them and the transports into the harbour. He wrote to the Admiralty, proposing, that if the enemy appeared in sight with a design to attack this place before Lord Dursley could get away with the first ships to the Downs, and the wind should prove Easterly, that Lord Dursley should have orders to go through the Needles and join the squadron from Plymouth, to enable him to be of a strength, that probably might do service on the enemy.

He went to view the Blockhouse and Battery on the point on Gosport side and the Forts and fortifications, and writ his opinion of them to the Prince of Denmark and proposed how best to secure the ships in the harbour, and the stores in the Dockyard, should the enemy endeavour to attack them.

Soon after, Sir George Byng was ordered to repair himself to the Downs with all the ships that were ready ; and to take under his command all the ships ordered to rendezvous there from the Thames, the Medway, from Portsmouth, Plymouth and Yarmouth.

Feb. 22 Orders.

And he was directed when all the ships were together to go off to Dunkirk and attack the enemy if it should be judged practicable. When he had appeared off of Dunkirk, he was, according as winds might be, to repair, either to the Flats of the Foreland, the Downs, Rye Bay, or where he thought proper to intercept them should they proceed Westward, Northward, or attempt to come up the River Thames. But he was to return off of Dunkirk again when the weather was fair and the winds would permit. At the time Sir George Byng received these orders, the wind was at S. and S.S.E. and it looked dirty, so that he could not get out that afternoon.

But the next morning the wind coming to the Westward of the South, he left orders for hastening the rest of the ships fitting out, and for them to follow him as they should be ready, and got under sail with five ships and a fireship, and my Lord Dursley with him.

Feb. 24th sailed to the Downs.

He stood to the Eastward with fine fresh gales and came into the Downs the next day.

25th Fleet in the Downs.

Here he found Sir John Jennings, Vice Admiral of the Red, and Baker, Rear Admiral of the White, and eighteen men-of-war.

Council of War.

The ships from Yarmouth Roads, Spithead and the Nore being now joined in the Downs, Sir George Byng held a Council of War. They had then no fresh intelligence of the enemy at Dunkirk than what was sent by the Admiralty the 18th instant, and from Ostend the $\frac{3\text{ March}}{21\text{ Feb.}}$, and from [the] Captain [of the] Nightingale's letter, no certain account was to be depended on, of the strength of the enemy or disposition they were making and the small clean snow which Sir John Jennings sent over the day before, to look into Flemish Road or to gain intelligence, had been chased back this morning by scouts of the enemy, who had several cruisers lying off of Dunkirk.

'It was therefore the opinion of this Council that it was of the highest importance to know if the enemy was still in Flemish Road and to be informed of their strength; in order to it, it was agreed, to proceed with the fleet off of Dunkirk'; and Sir George Byng not knowing whether any ships were joined from Brest, or how soon they might, wrote to be strengthened as soon as possible.

Feb. 26th sailed to Graveline Pits. 27.

The next day he weighed with the fleet about five in the afternoon, and at eleven the next morning they stood in fair by Calais, and about noon he anchored in Graveline Pits.

Soon after, the guns were fired at Graveline which a prisoner informed him afterwards, was on the Pretender's passing through that town in his way to Dunkirk.

In the afternoon Sir George Byng went in the Ludlow Castle (a 40-gun ship) within two miles of Flemish Road, to view the ships that lay there; and he had a very good sight of them. They were about 27 sail small and great in the Road. One seemed a ship of 60 guns, three of about 50 guns, five of 40 odd, and the rest downwards to twenty odd guns, who lay with their topsails loose and between forty and fifty ships within the heads above the Forts, two or three of which seemed to be large ships. There were not more than three ships in the basin that he could see.

All this Sir George Byng could depend on, and when he had thus made as near a discovery as he could, he returned into the fleet.

Sir George Byng seeing the enemy no stronger, did not think any ships from Brest had joined them; and none of the enemy appearing the next morning, he weighed with the fleet, intending to shift roads, and lie for a day or two off of Dunkirk in the fair way for the other Channel, to observe the enemy's motions should they come out that way, which if they did not in that time, the Spring tide was so far over, that he thought they could do nothing until the next; and so intended from thence to proceed over to the Downs again, as a much better road, and where the squadron would lie with more security.

Sailed to the N.E. Channel.

Feb. 28th.

Sir George Byng when he weighed, stood on the back of the Sands off of Dunkirk in the fair way of the N.E. channel to prevent their coming out that way.

The wind now blew very fresh at S.S.E., but soon after coming to S.S.W., and looking likely to blow, he consulted the Admirals with him, and

they agreed with him, that it was best to ride in Graveline Pits, both for the security of the squadron, and to lie in the way of the ships from Brest. Then he came to an anchor again in Graveline Pits, where he rode with fresh gales and squalls, and he sent out scouts every way.

Anchored in Graveline Pits.

At Court they were satisfied and easy when they heard Sir George Byng was off of Dunkirk. My Lord Godolphin writes to him that he 'made no question but from the time of his appearing upon the coast, the French would send away immediately over land to stop the Brest squadron if they were not gone to sea and out of their reach.'

Sir George Byng having viewed the ships in Flemish Road to the number of twenty seven sail, and there being a greater number up above the piers, which they judged could not come out till the rising of the next Spring tides, especially the biggest ships of them; and as those in Flemish Road might go out at the eastern channel with no chance of preventing them but by lying on the backsides of the sands of Dunkirk, there it was thought the squadron would be very much exposed to weather, so early as this is in the year and the wind coming more westerly and variable from S. by W. to W.S.W. and looking as if it would blow and be dirty weather, 'it was the opinion of Sir George Byng and the Admirals with him, to weigh and turn out from Graveline Pits and make the best of their way to the Downs, as the safer road, should it prove bad weather, and to join the ships from the westward and the Nore, that Sir George Byng might be in a condition against the next lifting of the tides, to go over again and guard as much

Sailed 30 the Downs.

as possible the channels of Dunkirk, and to prevent if possible the joining of their ships from the westward, or any squadron from Brest. At the same time it was agreed to send a small squadron off of the north channel of Dunkirk to observe the motions of the ships in Flemish Road.'

Sir George Byng accordingly sailed out of Graveline Road, made a disposition of ships for our scouts, ordered Canning with a small squadron to lie off the back of the sands of Dunkirk, and came with the fleet to an anchor in the Downs in fresh gales and thick dirty weather.

Mar. 2.

He immediately wrote to desire 'that if his coming over on this side was not approved of, the Prince of Denmark would send him orders, which he would immediately put in execution; for let what would be the chance, he should have the satisfaction of doing his duty in obeying commands. He at the same time wrote it as his opinion that the ships in Flemish Road could not proceed upon any design as yet; and therefore he thought the service was no ways obstructed by his lying here, till he could receive the Prince's orders for his further proceeding; and that the fleet was very well here, where they were ready to put in execution any orders that might be thought most for the service.'

His proceedings were approved of at Court, and he was acquainted that 'the Queen and the Prince were very well satisfied that he would do all that possibly could be done to oppose and intercept the enemy should they come out.'

☞ [*sic*] My Lord Godolphin says to him in his letter, that 'he was very glad to hear he was come back to the Downs, which he thought was the best station for his purpose, as well as the safest at

this time of the year.' They sent him notice that the squadron at Plymouth would soon join him, as it had been only detained by contrary winds, and that the winds had since been fair. They also acquaint him that the ships were hastening to him from the Medway and from Portsmouth.

Mar. 4th Orders from the Prince.

Then he received by express the Prince of Denmark's orders, signifying, 'that as they had reason to believe the enemy was designed with land forces to Scotland, he was to consider in what manner, and where, he might best come to an anchor, or cruise with the fleet, to intercept or follow the enemy if they came out and bent their course northward, or in case they attempted to come on the coast of England, or to go westward through the Channel. And when he should be joined by the squadron from the westward which was now arrived at St. Helens, he was to consider whether he had strength enough to divide the ships into two squadrons; and if so, in what manner these squadrons might be best employed.'

Mar. 5th Council of Flag Officers.

The next morning the western squadron joined him. Upon his being thus joined, he held a consultation of Flag Officers. The Admirals with him were Sir J. Jennings, V.A. of the Red, Lord Dursley, V.A. of the Blue, and Admiral Baker, Rear-Ad. of the White. They were unanimously of opinion, 'that for the better preventing the enemy's ships which may be designed to join their squadron at Dunkirk, and for observing the motions of the enemy there, to proceed with the whole fleet over to Graveline Pits on the 8th of this month, the tides then beginning to lift, and after having viewed the posture of the enemy there, to proceed with the greatest part of the

fleet to lie off the north channel of Dunkirk, and at the same time make a detachment to cruise between Beachy and over towards Dieppe, in the fairway, that may intercept the enemy's ships which may come from the westward, or give them notice of their motions, that they might endeavour to prevent their joining.' Sir George Byng acquainting the Prince with these resolutions, the Prince approved of them, except that part which related to his remaining in the Downs till the eighth of this month 'as there was reason to think that the Enemy might even upon the dead of the neap tide and a fair wind, proceed northward with the ships in Flemish Road.'

Letters from Court.

Though this was so pressing, they were easy at Court, since they heard Sir George Byng had been off of Dunkirk. Mr. Hopkins wrote him on the 5th of March 'that their apprehensions of a descent from France were pretty well over, and that they now almost wished they were out of Dunkirk, since there was already so good a fleet together, and so well commanded.' He acquaints him in the same letter, 'that they had the morning before received an express from Ostend giving an account of the particulars of the Enemy, that the Pretender was certainly at Dunkirk and his design as certain upon Scotland; that they had about fifteen battalions to embark, but he did not hear of any horse; that four Scotch Lords had been sent as hostages from Scotland for the performance of the promises that country had made to the French King; that they give out they intend to sail from Dunkirk the 20th instant, N.S.' He adds, 'our friends grow strongly daily, and I don't doubt but matters will suddenly be as well

as you or I can wish. That there was near seven thousand men in Holland ready to embark and that the States had sent orders to their Admiralty to spare no cost or pains to fit out a good squadron for their convoy, which will be ready to sail as soon as the enemy.'

My Lord Sunderland in a letter to Sir George Byng of the same date (the 5th March) writes to him, 'that he takes for granted now the Enemy have had a sight of him, they will hardly venture out,' and adds, 'I wish with all my heart they would, for I own, without making you a compliment, I think we are very safe in your hands, and the rest of the Flags with you. I am sure you will do all that men can do for the service of the Queen and the Public, as you have done already in manning out such a number of ships which without you had never been done.'

Before these letters from the Prince pressing his sailing sooner than the time they had set and these letters from Mr. Hopkins and Lord Sunderland got to him, he was sailed; for though it had been resolved not to sail till the 8th, yet the next morning, upon one of the out scouts from the westward making a signal of seeing ships, Sir George Byng immediately unmoored, and got under sail as soon as possible. The wind was then fresh at N.W. and by W. He intended to intercept them if they were the Enemy, or proceed directly off of Dunkirk; and then govern himself as winds and weather would give leave.

Sailed. March 6th.

Just before he sailed, Captain King, General Cadogan's Aide-de-Camp, brought him letters from the General at Ostend from whence he came over in a sloop two nights before. The General acquaints him that he had received

the Queen's orders if the enemy put any troops on board their fleet at Dunkirk with a design to land in Great Britain, that he should embark with a proportionate number of English battalions and to come away with them to the first port of Great Britain he could make. That the Pretender was at Dunkirk; that fifteen battalions under the Count de Gassé were to embark with him for Scotland, where he was invited by a considerable party. That he had provided shipping at Ostend and Bruges for ten battalions, with whom he should be ready to sail 18/19 instant, and desires Sir George Byng would order such a convoy for them, as he should think necessary. And that the Pensioner of Holland had just sent him notice, that eight of their ships were ready to sail and join him.[1] Captain King acquainted Sir George Byng, that after he had left General Cadogan, the Governor of Ostend told him he had then just received fresh advice from Dunkirk, that the enemy had embarked all their troops; but when Sir George Byng appeared off of Graveline Pits, they debarked them again; and since his leaving that place, they were ordered on board a second time, and it was believed they might in a day or two more be all on board and ready to sail.

General Cadogan's letter.

Sir George Byng despatched away Captain King immediately with a letter to General Cadogan acquainting him 'he would order a Squadron into Ostend Road to be ready to convoy the troops, when he should think fit to embark them; and that the Commanding Officer of that Squadron should have orders to observe his directions in

[1] 'The rendezvous appointed for them is at Scoonfelt [Schoonveldt], on the coast of Zeeland' (*House of Lords MSS.*, viii. 35).

relation to the landing them in such part of Great Britain as he should think for the Service.'

When Sir George Byng sailed he left orders at Deal and Dover for all the ships that should come in, to proceed after the Fleet, off of the North Channel of Dunkirk. There he appointed the rendezvous to be with a southerly or westerly wind, but with the winds easterly, so that they could not hold it up, it was to be in the Downs. In a letter to the Prince acquainting him with his sailing again, he desires 'he would be assured, they would do all that is possible for them to do; and that if they were fortunate in coming up with the enemy, he had no doubt but they should prove themselves Her Majesty's faithful subjects, doing their duty in their stations.'

Sailed and proceedings.

It was (as has been mentioned) upon the out scouts making signals of seeing ships, that Sir George had got under sail so suddenly. The wind had blown so fresh S. westerly the day before, and this morning, that it had put the Cruisers to the westward by their station; and in the thick weather this morning, they had fallen in with eleven sail and were near gun shot of some of them. They made five of them to be of about 50 or 60 guns, and the others of smaller force; they had chased the cruisers over in sight of Sir George Byng, and it was upon their making the signal that he had immediately weighed. He now stood over to them, but they stood in for Graveline Pits, and were so far ahead of him, that he thought it to no purpose to stand after them, believing them to be some of the ships expected from West France, and intending to lie off of the North channel of Dunkirk, to endeavour to prevent their proceeding to sea from thence. In the

evening he had little winds and calm, and he came to an anchor with the Fleet between Dover and Calais. Captain Canning's squadron, which he had sent off the North channel of Dunkirk, joined him here. He acquainted Sir George Byng that the enemy's ships lay in Flemish Road the same number, and in the same manner, as when Sir George Byng last saw them.

March 7th. Drove off of Dungeness.

The next morning before day a very fresh gale sprung up at E.N.E., which obliged him to lie at an anchor with the Fleet till the windward tide was made, which was about 10 o'clock. When he got under sail, he intended to have recovered the Downs, but the wind blew so hard at E.N.E. he could not fetch into the Downs, and standing in for Dover Road, he found there ran so great a sea, and the wind so far out easterly and likely to blow hard that he judged it best for the security of the fleet to bear away for Dungeness, which he accordingly did, and came to an anchor within that place at one that afternoon with no other damage but the Exeter's losing an anchor and the smaller ships two or three topmasts.

Letters to Court.

Here the Fleet rode out hard gales while Sir George Byng was much concerned to be forced so far to leeward. However, it was some satisfaction to him, as he expresses in one of his letters, from thence, 'that the enemy with these winds were locked fast from going to the Northward. All that he thought could be now done was to ply up to them with the very first opportunity of weather; and he intended not to lose one moment's time in repairing again off of Dunkirk; for he was of opinion, in the Spring tides that were coming on this week, they would endeavour to

get out, which ' (as he expresses in a letter to my Lord Sunderland written from hence) ' would give him the greatest mortification in the world, and he not have a sight of them ; assuring him, that all endeavours shall be used to come up with them, that can be used by men, who must submit to wind and tides.'

Sir George Byng's letter from hence to Mr. Secretary Boyle [1] upon this occasion is as follows ' I was in hopes I should have had a better occasion to have acquainted you with the proceedings of the Fleet, than to tell you, we are driven by ill natured winds so far as this from the enemy. However, Sir, be in no pain for us : the very first slatch of weather we will work up to them again, not without hopes of giving you a good account of them. Though we think they were yesterday joined by eleven ships from the westward, yet we do not want strength to deal with them, if it be possible to come up with them. It may be thought these ships from the westward should have been prevented from joining with those at Dunkirk ; but the winds and weather were fresh, as drove our scouts off of their station, which I had placed far westerly enough, though the first of their seeing them was falling in amongst them, between Dover and Calais in thick weather. These are accidents men of our profession are liable to. I will hope for a better chance to prove myself a servant of my country.'

The next day, the weather promising a little better, though the wind blew still fresh at E.N.E., Sir George Byng got up yards and topmasts at 4 in the afternoon and prepared to sail the next flood, intending to play to windward if possible

[1] Henry Boyle, Principal Secretary of State, 1708–10 ; created Baron Carleton, 1714 ; died, 1725.

for the North Channel of Dunkirk. At 7 in the evening, the weather promising to be fair, though the wind was still fresh at E.N.E. Sir George Byng made the signal to unmoor, thinking to tide it up if he could, to the eastward. At 8 o'clock he made the signal to weigh, and at ten he weighed with the wind at E.S.E., and passed with the fleet by Dungeness Lighthouse at twelve that night.

Mar. 8th. Sailed.

At six o'clock the next morning Sir John Jennings in the Bedford fired several guns having struck upon the East part of the Ripraps,[1] a long sand that lies in the middle of the channel between Boulogne and Dungeness; but he got clear again without any visible damage. Sir George Byng fearing the enemy should get out this high water, ordered at seven this morning Captain St. Loe in the Tartar with two ships more, the best sailers, to stretch ahead of the Fleet, to the northward of the Sands in sight of Graveline Pits, and so along to the northward of the Sands off of the North Channel of Dunkirk; and ordered him, upon discovering any fleet of ships, to lie and observe their motions with his two best sailing ships and send the worst back to him, to give him intelligence, making the signal as soon as she [*sic*] returned in sight of the fleet.

Mar. 9th.

About nine that morning, as Sir George Byng was standing with the Fleet down on the back of the Sands, between Calais and Dunkirk, where he hoped to find the enemy in the afternoon, he was joined off of Calais by Van Buren with four Dutch men-of-war.

Off of Dunkirk.

[1] The Colbart or the Ridge.

At one in the afternoon being then off of Dunkirk an advice boat came to him from Ostend. It brought him a letter from Captain King, Aide de Camp to General Cadogan, dated the $\frac{7}{18}$ instant at ten in the morning, which gave him no small mortification, as it brought 'him an account of the enemy's sailing from Flemish Road the night before, which was the sixth instant O.S. That they were at the time of his sending him this advice riding in the Pits before Nieuport, within a league and a half of the town; and that he was credibly informed that all the troops, arms, provisions, &c. that were to be embarked at Dunkirk were on board. He acquaints him at the same time, that all things for the embarkation of the English troops were in readiness, but was assured that General Cadogan (who was then at Bruges) could not put them on board, till he heard from Sir George Byng and what further motions the enemy made with their fleet.'

Advice that the French were sailed from Dunkirk.

The master and men of this advice boat acquainted Sir George Byng that they saw them lying there; that at nine last night they came with their boat to an anchor, and saw them put abroad their lights and signals by guns, and were sure they sailed in the night, for they lay with their boat at an anchor till broad day this morning, and then saw none of their ships.

By this movement to the eastward, Sir George Byng could not imagine they were bound to any other part than Scotland, but where in that country he was at a loss to guess.

He immediately called a Council of Flag Officers. They were: Sir John Jennings, Lord Dursley and Admiral Baker. He laid before them

this intelligence from Captain King; he had before them the master and men of the advice boat; the former advices from General Cadogan were considered, and those received from time to time from the Prince and the Ministry. When all this was considered they came to an opinion 'that the enemy's design must be upon Scotland; but having no particular intelligence on what place it was unanimously resolved, to leave Admiral Baker with his division, and the four Dutch men-of-war, that joined them this morning, to proceed to Ostend, to convoy with the whole squadron the troops designed for England or Scotland; or to appoint such part as he judged sufficient, and to follow with the rest after them, and they resolved to proceed with the Fleet in pursuit of the enemy, in the first place to the Road of Edinburgh, and then to govern themselves upon the intelligence they should receive for finding the enemy.'

A Council of Flag Officers.

As soon as this Council was over, which was about half an hour after four in the afternoon, Sir George Byng made the signal to call in all Cruisers; ordered Admiral Baker over to Ostend; ordered Van Buren who commanded the Dutch squadron to join him; gave out the line of battle, and rendezvous, which was in case of separation at the Frith of Edinburgh; and then made the signal to bear away with the rest of the Fleet; and he stood away to the northward, bending his course, as he imagined, after the enemy towards Edinburgh, with hard gale, with rain and snow, and the wind from S. to W., S.W., and W. and by N.

Sailed to Scotland.

On the fourth days sailing at noon, they made the Cheviot Hills in Northumberland, and in the

afternoon, St. Abbs's Head on the coast of Scotland; and at 8 that night, they saw the Lighthouse of the Isle of May which lies at the entrance of the Frith of Edinburgh; and at eleven it being calm Sir George Byng made the signal and came to an anchor with the fleet at about three leagues distant to the southward of it.

Mar. 12th Anchored off the Frith of Edinburgh.

When he anchored, he sent Captain Hamilton who was well acquainted in these parts, ashore to the Isle of May to get intelligence of the French Fleet.

But the next morning before he could return, as the day opened, Sir George Byng perceived the enemy's fleet about four leagues from him, to the northward of the Isle of May, to the number of twenty six ships (one with a flag at main-topmast head) getting under sail as fast as they could; some were already under sail, and they stood to the northward. They had come to an anchor there, the evening before.

Mar. 13th Saw the French Fleet and pursued it.

Upon sight of them Sir George Byng immediately weighed, and stood after them, with small gales of wind at W.N.W. sending the best sailing ships ahead of him to try if possible to stop their way.

At the same time he sent a ship to Berwick with a letter to Lord Leven who commanded in Edinburgh to acquaint him with his arrival off the coast, and of his being in chase of the enemy; he thought this would give encouragement to the friends of the Government in those parts. And in a letter to the Admiralty which he now wrote while in chase he says 'They have the advantage of us, that their ships are clean and that most of ours foul; and we can say no more

for ourselves than that we will do all that is possible for men to do. If the enemy by their sailing, should get from us, that we lose sight of them, Sir John Jennings and I are together, and have resolved to ply up again to Edinburgh Frith, to prevent their landing anything at that place.'

Sir George Byng pursuing the chase, had sometimes reasonable hopes of coming up with them. The Dover commanded by Captain Matthews,[1] and the Ludlow Castle commanded by Captain Haddock,[2] being the only clean sailing ships, were the first that came up with a part of their fleet about three in the afternoon; and passing by some of their smaller ships, to come up with their bigger, with hopes of stopping them till they could be relieved, they engaged two or three of their biggest ships, and amongst the rest the Salisbury.

The chase continuing all day they were off of Aberdeen about eight o'clock at night.

Sir George Byng in this day's run plainly perceived the enemy gained considerably from most of the fleet; theirs being all clean ships and almost all his being foul. However he continued the pursuit in the night with a press of sail, following the fires which some of his headmost ships repeated at times.

From the darkness of the night, they lost sight of all but the Salisbury, which Matthews and Haddock did not part with. About two in the morning, several other ships coming up with her, and firing into her, and being now fallen in

[1] Thomas Matthews (1676–1751), Vice-Admiral, 1742; Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet at the battle off Toulon, 1744, from the events arising out of which he was cashiered in 1747.

[2] Nicholas Haddock (1686–1746), Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean, 1738–42; Admiral of the Blue, 1744.

among the headmost ships of the fleet, she struck and surrendered. The Ludlow Castle's boat going on board of her, sunk, and the Leopard's boat entered men into her first. She had been an English man of war and the Chevalier de Nangis now commanded her.

The Salisbury taken.

At the opening of the day Sir George Byng sent an Officer to the masthead. He could count but eighteen of the enemy's ships as far as he could see in the E.N.E. of him.

14. Gives over the chase.

He now considered that this chase had carried him to the northward as far as Buchan Ness; that the enemy was at a great distance from him; that the experience of yesterday's chase, showed him how fruitless a further chase would be at this distance, when they had made so little impression with the advantage of twice a nearer distance; and considering the enemy's were all clean ships and that there was very little wind, in which they sailed away from him; that he had run some of his own ships out of sight; and not knowing the circumstances Edinburgh might be in now, which it was apparent the enemy had principally in view; and thinking his next immediate concern ought to be for that place, where his appearance might confirm in their obedience, those who continued faithful to the Queen; he judged it necessary to have the advice of the Flags with him, in the measures to be further taken upon their consulting together, and considering all the points, they came to a resolution 'to lie here to and through all this day to get their ships together, and to put those disabled in a condition for service: then to make the best of their way to the Frith of Edinburgh

which they not only looked upon as the place where the enemy's designs were chiefly bent, but thought it was for the security of the north part of Britain that that port should principally be guarded; and were of opinion that their appearing, would encourage the Queen's faithful subjects and dishearten such as should have any thoughts to rebel. And they resolved on their arrival there, to come to such further resolutions as the nature of the service should require.'

Accordingly Sir George Byng lay with the fleet off and on all this day with moderate gales and fair weather, and distributed the French prisoners into the ships of the Fleet.

The next morning having got his ships together, and those in the best condition he could, that wanted it; and the wind coming strong, and blowing hard with a great sea; and judging the enemy could not seize the shore to make any attempt, he bore away with the fleet, standing towards the Frith of Edinburgh, and anchored in Leith Road at six in the evening.

15. Sailed for the Frith of Edinburgh. Anchored at Leith.

'Thus did the French fleet' (says Sir George Byng in a letter to the Admiralty) 'get away by favour of the night, and our want of clean ships, for had we had such I think most of that squadron had fallen into our hands.'

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Whereas there is an absolute necessity that all Her Majesty's Ships in sea pay, which are within reach and fit for service, should repair to the Downs with all imaginable despatch, to prevent attempts which may be made by the

enemy from Dunkirk, you are therefore hereby required and directed, forthwith to repair to Spithead, and take upon you the command of all Her Majesty's Ships there and in Portsmouth Harbour. And whereas I have this night sent orders by express to the Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's Ships named in the margin,[1] to make all possible despatch in the getting them ready, and sending them to the Downs by one, two, or three at a time, as fast as they shall be so ready; you are when you come to Spithead, to despatch away to the Downs, with all possible diligence such of the said ships as shall not be sailed in the manner before mentioned, directing their Captains to remain there till further order, and not to take any Merchant Ships or vessels under thier convoy, and if the Lord Dursley, Vice Admiral of the Blue, shall be at Spithead, you are to send him to the Downs with some of the aforesaid ships.

In case you shall find a want of men to enable any of the said ships to repair to the Downs, you are to cause them to be furnished from such of Her Majesty's ships in Portsmouth harbour as will take up longest time to be in a condition for the sea; and you are to use your best endeavours to take as many men from the Merchant ships which shall be at Spithead and in Portsmouth Harbour as possibly you can, except from such of them as are employed in the public service,[2] and to such of them as shall be at Spithead, you are to cause to be seen in safety into Portsmouth Harbour, and of your proceeding herein you are

[1] Torbay, Bedford, Berwick, Swallow, Adventure, Weymouth, Cruiser, Gosport, Hunter (Fireship)

[2] See Byng's narrative of 'Proceedings,' page 18, for his reasons for disregarding this part of his instructions, also his letter to Burchett of 20th February.

to give frequent accounts to my Secretary for my information.

You are during your being at Portsmouth or Spithead to consider and report to me your opinion in what manner Her Majesty's Ships which will be left in that harbour and the magazines may be the best secured, should the enemy attempt anything on them; and having done this, and despatched away the ships, you are to make the best of your way to town, and expect my further orders.

Given under my hand this 17th of February, 1707/8.

GEORGE.

Endorsed: Received at 9 at night.

17 Feb. Burchett to Byng:—Covering letter to the preceding orders from Prince George. Contains list of ships from the Thames and Medway, and from Portsmouth, Plymouth and Yarmouth Roads, which are to rendezvous in the Downs under Byng's command.

River Thames:	Advice
	Falkland
	Bonadventure
	Squirrel
	Griffin, fireship
River Medway:	Monmouth
	Leopard
	Worcester
	Penzance
	Medway
	Crown
	Jersey
	Lark
	Dreadnought
	Dragon
	Roebuck
	St. Albans

Portsmouth :	as in the Prince's orders above less the Hunter fireship
Plymouth :	Warwick Tilbury
Yarmouth Roads :	Chatham Lyme Mermaid (viii. 209).

17 Feb. List of ships made in Admiralty Office to watch enemy's Dunkirk force :—

			Foreign Convoys
†Bedford Berwick †Torbay *Swiftsure	Portsmouth	Monmouth Jersey Roebuck	Ready to sail for Jamaica
†Lennox †Medway	Medway	Leopard Swallow Panther	Ready to sail for St. Helena
†Advice †Falkland †Experiment	Thames	Warwick Valeur	Ready to sail for Newfoundland
†Crown †Dragon Worcester †Glasgow †Penzance	Nore	Weymouth Lark	Ready to sail for Barbadoes

†St. Albans, Sheerness
*Nottingham, Chatham
Dreadnought, Blackstakes
Bonadventure, Longreach
Griffin, fireship, Deptford
†Anglesea, Woolwich

Those marked * date of completion uncertain
Those marked † to be completed between 20 Feb. and 1 March
Others, already completed

Chatham, †Mermaid, †Lyme — Yarmouth Roads

*Tilbury, Plymouth
†Nightingale, N. Foreland
†Ludlow Castle, Harwich (viii. 56–7).

17 Feb. Prince George of Denmark to Rear-Admiral Baker :—He is to take the ships in the Medway and at the Nore to sea at once and to proceed to the Downs, ' and to keep a ship or two constantly cruising off of Dunkirk ' (viii. 207–8).

17 Feb. Prince George of Denmark to Sir John Jennings :—He is to send the Thames Squadron at once to the Downs and is then to go into the Medway and to hasten to sea such of Baker's ships as have not yet sailed (viii. 210–11).

17 Feb. Prince George of Denmark to Captain Maine of the Nightingale :—he is to cruise with his ship off Dunkirk and to get what information he can of the enemy's preparations, and if possible to take prisoners from the shore or from fishing boats (viii. 208).

17 Feb. Prince George of Denmark to Captain Christopher Myngs, Commissioner at Portsmouth :—he is to hasten the sailing of the squadron from Portsmouth and to arrange for its manning, the ships to sail individually as soon as ready. Men to be pressed from merchant ships (viii. 208–9).

17 Feb. Marlborough to Lieut. General Lumley :—he is to ' have a number of battalions . . . forthwith put in readiness to embark ' under Cadogan.

17 Feb. Marlborough to Major-General Cadogan :—he is to be ready to sail with the troops either from Ostend ' or in Zealand.'

18 Feb. Burchett to Sunderland :—shall Captain Walker with the Plymouth Squadron be sent to Spithead instead of with the convoy to Lisbon, which can go under Leake's protection instead ?

18 Feb. Reply to the above :—the Queen approves of Walker bringing his squadron to Spithead, thence to join Byng in the Downs (viii. 34).

18 Feb. Prince George of Denmark to Rear-Admiral Baker :—if the enemy leave Dunkirk Baker is to use his ' utmost endeavours to come up with them, and to attack them in case you shall

judge that the ships which you shall have in the Downs may be of sufficient strength to do so' (viii. 211).

18 Feb. Prince George of Denmark to Captain Walker :— he is to proceed to St. Helens at once with such of his ships as are ready, the rest to follow immediately they are ready (viii. 212).

20 Feb. Byng to Burchett, from Portsmouth Dock :— He and Lord Dursley arrived on the previous afternoon. The ships are 200 men short, the Prince's orders to Myngs having had 'little or no effect' because 'the alarm was soon given' and the merchantmen left Spithead and the harbour. Byng has taken men from the Irish transports although the Prince has prohibited ships in the public service to be touched, because 'these transports can have no convoy until our expedition is over.' Dursley is ready to sail in the Berwick with the ships now at Spithead ; they will go tomorrow 'if the wind gives leave, but it is now at south and looks as if it will be dirty weather.' The Bedford is minus her guns and provisions but will be ready in five days. What is to be done with Walker's squadron when it arrives ? (viii. 61).

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Admiralty Office. 21st Feb. 1707/8.

Sir,—I have received your letter of the 20th instant, and this morning I communicated it to His Royal Highness and his Council at Kensington, and for the reason you give therein, the Prince does approve of the orders you have given for taking the men out of the four transport ships designed for Ireland.

As for the Panther, it is absolutely necessary

that she should proceed on the service of the East India Company, and therefore it is the Prince's pleasure that you do cause her to be manned in the same manner as you would have done, had you sent her to the Downs.

The Marines which you mention for the Weymouth and Berwick are I hope ere this at Portsmouth, and those for the Swallow at Deal; and all the Marines whose quarters are near Portsmouth being directed to march immediately thither, their Officers are ordered to embark on board such ships as you shall direct.

As you have proposed, there is [*sic*] orders given to the Navy Board that the Riggers and Ordinary at Portsmouth do assist in the fitting out the ships as they come out of the dock; and tomorrow night it will be determined how to dispose of Captain Walker's squadron, when they arrive at St. Helens from Plymouth.[1]

As for the Second Lieutenant of the Weymouth, he is ordered to hasten to his duty.

I hope Rear-Admiral Baker sailed this morning towards the Downs with the ships from the Nore and the River Medway, and that the ships from the Thames, by the diligence of Sir John Jennings, will not be many hours behind them; and the Chatham and the other two ships in Yarmouth Roads will be there with the first opportunity of a wind.

Since the last advices I sent you, I have had no account of the enemy at Dunkirk, but the Nightingale[2] is gone over thither for intelligence.

[1] In answer to Byng's query in his letter of 20th February.

[2] There is a letter from Burchett to Sunderland's Secretaries, dated 19th February, containing Captain Maine's intelligence, which did not amount to much, being merely a report from a Dutch captain who had captured a French privateer. Possibly Maine obtained more information. See *House of Lords MSS.*, viii. 57 and 62.

The Navy Board are directed to furnish Captain Arris of the Torbay with money, to enable him to man the said ship.

I am, Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

J. BURCHETT.

Endorsed: Received 23rd.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Sir,—This owns the receipt of your letter of the 21st instant, which I read to the Prince this night, and herewith you will receive His Highness's orders for your repairing with all possible despatch to the Downs, to which place from the Nore Rear Admiral Baker sailed yesterday about four o'clock with the ships named in the margin [1] hereof, and the Roebuck and Queenborough will convoy over the Flats the yacht which has Sir William Gifford [2] aboard, and the money to pay the ships.

Sir John Jennings gives me an account that he has manned the Shrewsbury and that he hopes to have men enough for the Ipswich and Lennox, otherwise he will take the Newark's and Newcastle's men, which will be the last ships fitted out at Chatham.

With the Prince his orders that come herewith, you will receive a copy of those sent to Sir John

[1] Dreadnought, Dragon, Leopard, Bonadventure, Worcester, Advice, Crown, Jersey, Lark, Penzance, Falkland, Medway

[2] Extra Commissioner of the Navy Board.

Jennings, as also the extract of a letter from the Captain of the Nightingale who has been off of Dunkirk for intelligence of the enemy's proceedings.

I am, Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

J. BURCHETT.

Admiralty Office,
22nd February, 1707/8.

ENCLOSURE: No. 1.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

In pursuance of Her Majesty's pleasure, you are hereby required and directed, to repair to the Downs as soon as possibly may be with all such ships of Her Majesty's at Spithead as are in a readiness for service, leaving orders for the rest to follow you thither with as much despatch as possibly may be; and whereas you will find by the enclosed copy of my instructions to Sir John Jennings, how he is directed to proceed with the ships that have been ordered from the rivers of Thames and Medway, you are if you find him in the Downs to take him under your command, and to put my aforesaid orders to him in execution, but if he shall be sailed you are to use your best endeavours to join him as soon as possibly may be.

In case the ships coming from Plymouth under command of Captain Walker shall arrive at Spithead before you sail from thence, you are to bring them also with you to the Downs, otherwise you are to leave orders for him with the Commissioner at Portsmouth,[1] to make the best

[1] Captain Christopher Myngs.

of his way after you, and where he shall join you in case you shall be sailed from the Downs before he arrives there. And when the ships shall be altogether, you are to consider at a Council of War, whether it may be most proper to keep them so, or to divide them into two squadrons (according to the advice you shall have of the strength of the enemy) the one to lie in the Downs, and the other to cruise between Rye and Calais, or in what other manner they may be best employed for intercepting the enemy, should they come out, or preventing any attempts which they may endeavour to make. And of your proceedings herein you are to give constant accounts to my Secretary for my information.

Given under my hand this 22nd February, 1707/8.

GEORGE.

Endorsed: Received 23rd at two in the afternoon by express.

ENCLOSURE: No. 2.

PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK TO SIR JOHN JENNINGS

In pursuance of Her Majesty's pleasure, you are hereby required and directed, so soon as you shall have despatched to the Downs all such ships as are fitting out in the rivers of Thames and Medway, which you shall find may be got thither in any reasonable time, you are forthwith to repair to Deal and go on board such one of Her Majesty's ships in the Downs as you shall think most convenient for you, and you are to

take under your command all Her Majesty's ships and vessels there, and with such of them as you judge the most proper, repair off of Dunkirk, to discover whether the enemy's ships are in Flemish Road, but you are to have a particular regard, that, according to the intelligence you shall receive of them, the strength you proceed with, be superior to that of the enemy, and if it shall be judged practicable at a Council of War to attack them, you are to use your utmost endeavours to do the same.

When you have thus appeared off of Dunkirk, you are, according as the winds may be, to repair either to the Flats of the Foreland, the Downs, Rye Bay, or such other place as you think most proper for intercepting the enemy, and should they proceed westward, northward, or attempt to come up the River Thames ; but you are to take care to return off of Dunkirk again when the weather is fair, and the winds will permit, and that there be proper ships constantly off of that port, to bring you the most early accounts that possibly may be of the enemy's proceedings. And in case you shall receive advice that they be put to sea, you are to follow them as far as they go, and use your utmost endeavours to come up with, and to take, sink, burn, or otherwise destroy them, giving frequent account of your proceedings for my information to my Secretary.

You are to send such one of the ships under your command, as you judge most proper, to the coast of Holland, in order to your being informed what Dutch ships of war are ready, and by the said ship, you are to send notice to the Officer Commanding the said ships of the States General, of what instructions you have received, and a rendezvous where he may join you, which you

are to order the Captain of the ship you send on this service to do without any loss of time, so soon as he shall have performed what is before directed. But in case Sir George Byng arrive in the Downs with the ships from Spithead before you proceed on this service, you are to put yourself under his command and deliver to him these orders, who is hereby required to put them in execution.

Given under my hand this 22nd February, 1707/8.

GEORGE.

22 Feb. Burchett to Sunderland :—Encloses draft orders to Jennings for the Queen's approval. If the Prince's naval council met 'this evening,' they intended to have asked the Queen what shall be done with Walker's squadron and whether Byng should cruise with one squadron between Rye and Calais, keeping the other in the Downs (viii. 34).

22 Feb. Reply to the above :—H.M. approves of the Admiralty's draft orders to Jennings with the addition that he is to arrange for the Dutch ships to join him. Byng and Walker are to join Jennings and they are then to decide whether to operate in one or in two squadrons according to their intelligence of the enemy (Admiralty 1/4091 : In-letters from Secretaries of State. P.R.O.)

22 Feb. Byng to Burchett, from Portsmouth Dock :—In accordance with the Prince's orders of 17 Feb. he has been considering the best plan for defending the ships left in the harbour and the magazines against attack. He thinks the enemy could land with ease in Stokes Bay or could enter the harbour with frigates and fire-ships. There is a boom, fifteen years old, which he is having inspected.

In conjunction with the Dockyard authorities he advocates :

(1) sinking fly boats in the Channel between Southsea Castle and Blockhouse Point.

(2) Removing the buoys which mark the channel from St. Helens.

(3) Preparing fireships for a counter-attack.

(4) Taking the guns away from Blockhouse Point and the Gosport forts, but if this is not approved of to station the Resolute, an old ship, off Blockhouse Point to prevent the enemy using it as a gun platform. The Gosport forts could be easily captured, but the platforms are too decayed to be of any use to the enemy if captured.

He suggests taking the great ships above the hardway for safety and the Royal William and Dorsetshire being prepared as floating batteries. If the enemy attack on the Gosport side the naval stores could be removed to the Common, but if they attack on the Portsmouth side the stores must be put in small ships and sent ' up the creeks ' (viii. 62–4).

22 Feb. Byng to Burchett, from Portsmouth Dock :— ' The Berwick sailed out of the harbour this morning,' she and Dursley's squadron at Spithead will sail for the Downs as soon as weather permits, ' but the wind is now so very fresh at E. that it is not possible for them to work to windward.' If the enemy attack Portsmouth before Dursley has left ' would it not be advisable ' that he should go through the Needles and join Walker's squadron coming from Plymouth ? (viii. 64–5).

23 Feb. Burchett to Secretaries of Sunderland, enclosing advices :—

Twenty-five sail are reported to have left Brest about twenty days before to intercept the Lisbon convoy, under the protection of Leake.

List of French ships at Dunkirk :—

Two ships of	54	guns	each	
One ship	,, 52	,,		
Two ships	,, 50	,,	,,	
One ship	,, 46	,,		
One	,, ,, 42	,,		
One	,, ,, 40	,,		
Four ships	,, 32	,,	,,	
Seven ships	,, 28	,,	,,	
Four	,, ,, 26	,,	,,	
Four	,, ,, 24	,,	,,	
Two	,, ,, 22	,,	,,	
Four	,, ,, 28	,,	,, (' que la Chambre de Commerce donne ').	

[Of these the Blackwall (52) was an English prize, captured in 1705, and also the Salisbury (50), which was captured in 1703.]

In addition to these thirty-three ships, the Hampton Court (70), and the Grafton (70), both captured in 1707, were also being got ready.

The whole force which was to carry fifteen battalions of troops was to sail on 20 March N.S. and was to be provisioned for six months (viii. 35–7).

23 Feb. Prince George of Denmark to Byng :—

With reference to Byng's letter to Burchett of 22 Feb. Lord Dursley is to go through the Needles to join Walker supposing that the enemy approach Spithead with an easterly wind, before Dursley is clear of it. Dursley and Walker are then to do their utmost to destroy the enemy (viii. 213).

23 Feb. Prince George of Denmark to Commissioner Isaac Townsend :—In accordance with Byng's proposals Townsend is to sink merchantmen at the entrance to Portsmouth harbour, if necessary (viii. 213).

24 Feb. Byng to Burchett, from Spithead :—Acknowledges the Prince's orders of 22 Feb. The wind on 23 Feb. was S. and S.S.E. with no prospect of getting out, but 'this morning' is S.W. and he will therefore sail at once if the weather clears enough to see the marks. The Bedford will be ready to sail on 25 Feb. 'and the Torbay in five or six days more.' Orders are being left for these and for the Orford and Swiftsure and also for Walker's squadron to follow Byng to the Downs as quickly as possible (viii. 236–7).

24 Feb. Byng to Burchett, from the Weymouth off St. Helens :—is standing east 'with a fine fresh gale at S.W. by W.' (viii. 237).

24 Feb. Prince George of Denmark to Byng :—
All the measures advocated by Byng for the defence of Portsmouth are to be undertaken at once. When he arrives at the Downs, Byng is to hold a council of war to decide how best to deal with the Dunkirk force if it puts to sea (viii. 214–15).

24 Feb. Prince George of Denmark to Jennings :—
If the Dunkirk force comes out on an easterly wind and runs west to attack Portsmouth, he is to attack it if strong enough, but if too weak he is to get ahead of the French and join the ships at Spithead, sending on a frigate to give warning of the enemy's approach (viii. 213–14).

24 Feb. Prince George of Denmark to Jennings :—
As Baker has already sailed, Jennings is to go to Deal and take command of the ships in the Downs till Byng arrives (viii. 215).

25 Feb. Jennings to Burchett, from the Chatham in the Downs :—He arrived at Deal about 8 P.M. on 24 Feb., on horseback, and at once sent a privateer from Dover to observe the enemy in Dunkirk and if possible to take some prisoners. He received the Prince's orders of 24 Feb. at 4 A.M. on the 25 Feb. and as soon as Baker's

squadron which 'is just appearing off the North Foreland,' arrives he will carry the whole force over to Graveline Pits to watch the enemy and to prevent them being reinforced from Brest. Submits that the ships at Portsmouth 'and those expected from Plymouth' should be ordered to concentrate with Jennings own force in the Downs or in Graveline Pits. [This of course had already been arranged for.] (viii. 67–8.)

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Admiralty Office.
26th February, 1707/8.

Sir,—I hope this will find you safely arrived in the Downs and comes to own the receipt of your letter of the 24th instant, with the survey of the Boom at Portsmouth which has been laid before the Prince and his Council; and since the said Boom cannot be effectually fixed before the 27th of next month it is hoped that the junction of our ships will prevent any mischief the enemy can do at Portsmouth.

I am, Sir,
Your very humble Servant,
J. BURCHETT.

Contrary winds have obliged Sir John Leake to come to St. Helens, but I am despatching this night orders to him by express to proceed on his voyage to the Straits. I wonder I hear nothing of Captain Walker.

26 Feb. Byng to Burchett from the Weymouth in the Downs:—He reached the Downs at midnight on 25 Feb. having taken some small French ships

off the Ness and Beachy Head, but from which he could get no clear intelligence of the enemy. He thinks however that they mean to send some ships to Dunkirk from Brest. He has just held a council of war, the report of which is enclosed and will sail in the evening. If the ships from Brest arrive they will be 'ships of weight' and therefore reinforcements will be desirable in order to cope with them. He wants the Bedford specially, 'for I have nothing but what I have on my back with me now.' Does not know if he will be allowed to appoint other officers in place of those absent from duty as other flag officers have been, but, 'however, nothing shall discourage me from doing my own duty in the best manner I can.'

List of ships in the Downs.

Medway	60 [64 ?]	Roebuck	40	Not come yet
Dreadnought	60 [64 ?]			
Berwick	70	Lark	40	
Monmouth	66	Ludlow Castle	40	
Jersey	50			
Leopard	50 [54 ?]	Adventure	40	
Advice	50	Gosport	40	
Falkland	50	Mermaid	32	
Worcester	50	Lyme	32	
Crown	50	Penzance	24	
Dragon	50 [48 ?]	Queen-borough	24	Not come yet
Bonadventure	50			
Chatham	50	Nightingale	24	
Weymouth	50	Cruiser	24	
Swallow	50	Hunter, fireship		

(viii. 237–8).

COUNCIL OF WAR

At a Council of War of Flag Officers held on board Her Majesty's Ship Weymouth, in the Downs, 26th February, 1707/8.

PRESENT :—

Sir George Byng, Admiral of the Blue.
Sir John Jennings, Vice Admiral of the Red.
Lord Dursley, Vice Admiral of the Blue.
John Baker, Esq., Rear Admiral of the White.

The ships from Yarmouth Roads, Spithead, and the Nore, joining in the Downs last night, and having no fresher intelligence of the enemy at Dunkirk than what was sent us by Secretary Burchett's letter of the 18th instant, and from Ostend the 3rd March, N.S., which Sir John Jennings received by express yesterday morning, besides the account from the Captain of the Nightingale's letter of the 21st instant from whence no certain account is to be depended on of the strength of the enemy, or disposition they make ; Sir John Jennings having sent over yesterday evening a clean small snow to look into Flemish Road, or to endeavour to gain intelligence of the enemy, but she being chased back this morning by scouts of the enemy, who have several cruisers lying off Dunkirk, and that Coast : We are unanimously of opinion that it is of the highest importance to know as soon as may be whether the enemy be still in Flemish Road, and being informed of their strength by the best manner we can. In order to it, do agree and resolve immediately to weigh with all the ships here and pro-

ceed over into Graveline Pits or off Dunkirk, to take the best view or gain the best intelligence we can of the enemy; and further to proceed, as a Council of War shall determine, either for following the enemy if they are sailed from Dunkirk, or to prevent the joining of the Brest and Dunkirk squadrons.

G. Byng.
J. Jennings.
Dursley.
J. Baker.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Sir,—Your letter of yesterday's date which I received this morning by express hath been communicated to His Royal Highness, and orders are sent this night to the several ports to hasten to you the several ships that are fitting out with directions to come to the Downs, without staying for one another and then to join you according to such rendezvous, or orders as you have left for them with the Muster Master at Deal, and herewith I send you the names of the said ships; and the Bedford, as you desire, is particularly hastened.

As for the Officers who are absent from their duty, the Prince commands me to acquaint you, that you have his consent to appoint others to act in their room, and if any of them do return to the ships whereunto they belong, it is within your power to try them at a Court Martial by a Warrant that will be sent you, and where it shall be found that their negligence gives reason to dismiss them; those who you shall appoint, will be confirmed in the employments you give them;

but it is possible that some gentlemen who are not now with their ships may be under the misfortune of sickness, and therefore, upon examining into these affairs you will be able best to judge of them, and according as you shall from time to time represent the same, the Prince will take such measures as are proper.

(His Highness commands me to acquaint you, that he is very well satisfied with your zeal to the public service and that it gives him no little satisfaction that you have determined to proceed off of Dunkirk, and that that determination hath been so speedily put in execution, which will it is hoped, frustrate any designs the enemy may have formed).[1]

I have written to the Navy Board to hasten to Deal twenty able pilots, and who are well skilled to the Northward, as far as the Northernmost part of Scotland, or as many of that number as they can possibly find.

I send you herewith the last advices of the enemy's naval preparations,[2] which I received this night, and am,

Sir,

Your very humble servant,

J. BURCHETT.

Admiralty Office,
27th February, 1707/8.

I had this day a letter from Captain Walker of the 24th from Plymouth, from which place he attempted to sail, but was forced back again.

[1] This paragraph is surrounded by a bracket, which appears to have been added later, possibly by Byng in connection with the enquiry into his conduct. Whoever wrote the bracket was evidently in a hurry, as it was not properly dried and has marked the opposite sheet of the letter.

[2] These advices amount to little except that Fourbin is about to sail (*House of Lords MSS.*, viii. 216).

27 Feb. Byng to Sunderland from off Dover :—He joined Jennings and Baker in the Downs on the night of 25 Feb. ' with the few ships [that] can at present be got together.' He is under sail for Graveline Pits or off Dunkirk (viii. 70).

27 Feb. Byng to Burchett from off the South Foreland :—He has received Burchett's letter of 25 Feb. On the evening of 26 Feb. ' it fell calm, so was forced to anchor within the South Foreland. This morning, at 4 o'clock I weighed again with very little wind at south, and am now standing over for Dunkirk ' (viii. 238).

28 Feb. Byng to Burchett from Graveline Pits :—He anchored in Graveline Pits on the afternoon of 27 Feb. ' and went down with a small frigate within 2 miles of Flemish Road to view the ships that lay there, and had a very good sight of them.' He observed 27 altogether, thought there was 1 sixty, 3 fifties, ' the rest downwards,' and between 40 and 50 ships within the heads above the forts, 2 or 3 of which seemed to be pretty large ships. Only 3 ships seemed to be in the basin, one unrigged and another with a white flag at the main mast head.

Does not think any ships can have reached Dunkirk yet from Brest. If no enemy appear from the west and ' if the weather be reasonable ' he is going to lie off Dunkirk for a day or two ' in the fairway for the other channel, to observe their motions, should they come out.' If the enemy does not come out within the next few days he does not think they will be able to again until the next Spring tide, so that if the enemy does not come out soon he will take his squadron back to the Downs, where it ' will lie with more security.' ' The wind is now at S.S.E., very fresh ' (viii. 38–9).

28 Feb. Byng to Burchett from Graveline Pits :—Has captured a fishing boat, since writing his previous letter in the morning, with one man in it, who reports 32 ships in Flemish Road, one

being either the Grafton or the Hampton Court. The man also reports 'that yesterday after we [Byng] came to an anchor, their King of England (as they call him) came to Gravelines, with 2 post chaise on his way to Dunkirk. 'There are 10,000 men [soldiers ?] in and about Dunkirk for the expedition, but where designed he [the man] knows not.' The enemy are also said to be expecting ships every day from Brest, so that with the wind at S.S.W. Byng and his flag officers think it best to continue to ride in Graveline Pits both for safety and in order to be able to intercept the ships from Brest (viii. 239).

28 Feb. Burchett to Byng:—Walker has put to sea from Plymouth but has been held up by a S.S.W. and S. by W. wind (viii. 216).

FROM LORD GODOLPHIN

Febr. 29, $170\frac{8}{7}$ [*sic*]

Sir,—I was to acknowledge the favour of a letter from you of the 27th from the Downs and of the 28th from Graveline Pits. As to the 1st, I hope the disagreements [?] you complain of are not absolutely true.

I am sure there is no reason for them, and as I am persuaded you are extremely zealous for the Queen's Service so I shall always make it my Endeavour that you may be easy in it.

I am glad to find by your 2nd letter that you are in a station, where, if wind and weather will allow you to continue, you may be able to hinder the ships expected from Brest, to join those of Dunkirk, as seems to be intended, and if your fisherman's news prove true, there is little room to doubt of that intention, but from the time of your appearing on the coast, I make no question the French will find a way immediately overland

to stop the Brest squadron if they were not gone to sea before and out of their reach.

When all the strength designed you from Portsmouth, Plymouth and the river is together, I hope you will be much superior to the enemy and be able to spare some of the ships that were appointed for convoy, which otherwise will quickly grow a clamorous thing [?]

I find some people here are of opinion that sinking of some old ships with stones and ballast in the harbour of Dunkirk, might be easily done and would go near to make it impossible for ships to go in or out there, at least for some time, and it would be a very great advantage to us if we could deprive them of the use of that port, though but this summer. Pray let me know your thoughts of this, when you have opportunity, as also to give my humble service to my Lord Dursley and thanks for the favour of his letter: I am with great truth, Sir,

Your most faithful humble servant,

GODOLPHIN.

COUNCIL OF WAR

At a Council of War of Flag Officers held on board Her Majesty's Ship Medway in Graveline Pits the 1st of March, 1707/8.

PRESENT:—

Sir George Byng, Admiral of the Blue.
Sir John Jennings, Vice Admiral of the Red.
Lord Dursley, Vice Admiral of the Blue.
John Baker, Esq., Rear-Admiral of the White.

Having viewed the Ships in Flemish Road to the number of 27 sail, and there being a greater number up above the Piers, which we judge

cannot come out 'till the rising of the next Spring, the wind coming more westerly, and looking as if it would blow, and be dirty weather, we are of opinion to weigh and turn out from this Road, making the best of our way to the Downs, thinking it a more safe road for the ships should it prove ill weather; and with all to join the ships that are coming from the westward and the Nore, that we may be in a condition against the next lifting of the tides, to come over again, and guard as much as possible the channels of Dunkirk, and to prevent if possible the joining of their ships from the westward, laying out scouts to the westward without one another between the Ness and Boulogne to hand signals to us, upon any ships coming from the westward; and at the same time to send a small squadron off the north channel of Dunkirk, to observe the motions of those in Flemish Road.

G. Byng.
J. Jennings.
Dursley.
J. Baker.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

You are hereby required and directed to appoint one of the 4th rate ships under your command when you can conveniently spare one, to convoy from the Downs to Spithead all such transport ships, ordnance vessels, store ships and others as are bound westward and ready to sail with her; and there being now in Dover Pier the several vessels named on the other side hereof which are laden with butter and cheese for Portsmouth and Plymouth, as also a vessel with ordnance

stores for the latter Port, you are to order the commander of the said ship to call at Dover for them, and carry them along with him to Spithead, sending an account of what ship you shall appoint for this service.

Given under my hand this first day of March 1707/8.

GEORGE.

	Vessel's names.	Master's names.
For Portsmouth	Neptune Hoy	Thomas Borton
	Content	John Falkner
	John & Elizabeth	Stephen Primrose
	William & Mary	Thomas Bishop
	Anne	William Dove
For Plymouth	Edward and Jane	Edward Woodall
	Dove	John Taylor
	John	William Peacock

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Admiralty Office. 1st March, 1707/8.

Sir,—I have received your two letters of the 28th of last month from Graveline Pits giving an account of the posture of the enemy's ships off of Dunkirk, and in that port, which I immediately communicated to His Royal Highness, and last night they were read to Her Majesty at a Committee of the Council, and as the resolutions taken at a Council of War which you held are approved of; so is the Queen and His Royal Highness well

satisfied that you will do all that possibly may be to oppose and intercept the enemy should they come out.

By a letter from Captain Walker dated last Friday, I find he was kept at Plymouth by contrary winds, but they having been since westerly, I am in hope he is past by St. Helens, and that he may be pretty near joining you, as also the Shrewsbury and St. Albans that are gone from the Nore, and the Roebuck, and the other three Frigates named in the margin.[1]

Sir William Jumper is doing all he can towards hastening the ships to you which are fitting out in the River Medway, and so is Mr. Myngs[2] those at Portsmouth, concerning which I will from time to time give you particular accounts.

I send you herewith the last advices from France, which I had from the Earl of Sunderland's office, as also a letter from my Lord High Treasurer,[3] which his Lordship gave me last night.

This will be brought to you by the Nightingale, and with it you will receive the Prince his orders for your sending a 4th rate to the Downs to convoy the trade from thence westward, so soon as you shall judge such a ship may be spared.

I am,

Your very humble Servant,

J. BURCHETT.

It is still said that the Enemy at Dunkirk expect to be joined by 4 or 5 ships from Brest.

[1] Queenborough Squirrel Glasgow
The Glasgow formed part of the Scots Navy, taken over after the Act of Union in 1707.

[2] Capt. Christopher Myngs.

[3] Lord Godolphin; the advices are of no importance.

[Advices :—Ships said to be at Dunkirk,

28 Privateers from 28–48 to 16–60 guns.
5 ships from Brest of 70 guns.
6 Frigates in the Road from 50 to 60 guns.
3 Privateers of 18, 22, and 26 guns.

There are other reports about the enemy's force, which however are vague and unhelpful. These advices appear in H. of L. MSS. viii. 217.]

$\frac{1}{12}$ March. Advices sent to Boyle from Dayrolle, our minister at the Hague :—

Cadogan has urged the Dutch to provide shipping for the troops which are to be embarked to follow the French, and also to sail with a squadron of their own.

Cadogan has received a letter from Byng of 28 Feb. and thinks Byng's force sufficient to stop the French. The Pretender is to leave Paris for Dunkirk on 7 March [N.S. ?]. The expedition is against Scotland.

The Pretender's force is likely to be 12 French battalions under Gassé and 3 Irish ones under Dillon, 5,000 men in all.

The Pretender arrived at Dunkirk either on 9 or 10 March [N.S. ?].

The French emphasize the good reception he will get in Scotland, where Jacobites are reported to have said that they will take Edinburgh Castle by surprise (vii. 566–8).

2 March. Byng to Burchett from the Medway in the Downs :—On 1 March 'the wind being more westerly and looking as if it would blow and be dirty weather' he decided in consultation with his flag officers to leave Graveline Pits and return to the Downs. Thinks the French cannot leave Dunkirk till the next spring tides. Those in the Flemish Road may leave by the

eastern channel which cannot be prevented except by the English squadron lying 'on the back side of the Sands of Dunkirk,' which however is too exposed. Downs also a better place for intercepting ships from Brest. Hears Dunkirk expedition is intended for Scotland (viii. 239–40).

2 March. Byng to Burchett from the Medway in the Downs:—Has received Burchett's letters of 27 and 28 Feb. Wind is now East, but thinks Downs still the best place for his squadron as the enemy cannot leave Dunkirk yet (viii. 240).

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Whereas I am informed by your letter to my Secretary that you are returned to the Downs, with the greatest part of the ships under your command, and what cruisers you have appointed to look after the enemy's ships at Dunkirk, which there is reason to believe are designed with land forces to Scotland; you are hereby required and directed to consider at a Council of War, in what manner, and where you may best come to an anchor, or cruise, with the ships under your command, to intercept or follow the enemy if they come out and bend their course northward; or in case they attempt to come on the coast of England, or to go westward through the Channel; and according to what shall be agreed upon, you are to govern yourself. And when you shall be joined by the ships under command of Captain Walker, which are arrived at St. Helens, you are also to consider at a Council of War, whether you have strength enough to divide the ships into two squadrons, and if so, in what manner the said squadrons may be best employed, for preventing

the enemy's getting out, or intercepting them if they do so, as aforesaid ; or intercepting the ships expected at Dunkirk from Brest. And you are to govern yourself according to what shall be determined thereupon, sending frequent accounts of your proceedings for my information.

Given under my hand this 3rd March 1707/8.

GEORGE.

[These orders were addressed to the Downs and were received by Byng on 4 March ; see his narrative of 'Proceedings,' page 24.]

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Admiralty Office, 3rd March, 1707/8

Sir,—I have received your two letters of yesterday's date, giving an account of your arrival in the Downs, and what cruisers you have appointed to give you intelligence of the motions of the enemy's ships at Dunkirk, and this night I send them to His Royal Highness, whose orders I send you enclosed, by which you are, by Her Majesty's Command, to govern yourself as to your further proceedings.

As to the Nightingale I send you herewith the Prince his orders for your sending her to Sheerness to be cleaned ; and by letter from Captain Walker of yesterday's date, he gives an account that he was arrived at St. Helens, and that he would make all possible despatch to you to the Downs.

He is under some uneasiness, and has more than once desired his Royal Highness that he may have leave to come on shore. I have written to him by this post, by the Prince his command, and acquainted him, that if he continues still of the same mind he must apply himself to you, and in

such case his Royal Highness commands me to signify his directions to you that you do give him leave to quit his command.

As to the Marines for the Swallow, they are now at Portsmouth, where it was hoped they might have got on board her, nor are there any to supply their place from hence ; but the first ship bound eastward from Spithead, will be directed to receive them on board, and to carry them to the Downs.

The Valure [1] is going from the Nore to the Downs, and she will convoy over the Flats the yacht that has the money on board for paying the ships under your command which are yet unpaid.

As to the Penzance, which you have ordered to Hellevoetsluis, it is uncertain what Resolutions you will take, upon your orders sent you herewith, and therefore, according to the movement you make, you will please to appoint how she shall join you.

There is all possible despatch making in hastening the ships to you from Portsmouth and the River Medway, and I hope to be able tomorrow to send you an account in what readiness they are.

I am, Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

J. BURCHETT.

I will send you by tomorrow's post a warrant for Mr. Durrant [?] to be volunteer in the Assurance ; and this comes to you by express.

3 March. Byng to Burchett from the Medway in the Downs :—Has received Burchett's letter of 1 March ; still thinks the Downs the best position (viii. 240).

[1] Often spelt Valeur ; a 24-gun French prize.

$\frac{3}{14}$ March. Cadogan to Byng from Ostend :—' The pretended Prince of Wales ' arrived at Dunkirk on 10 March N.S. and has fifteen battalions under Gassé ready to embark for Scotland, ' where he is invited by a considerable party.'

Cadogan has ten battalions and shipping for them at Ostend and Bruges and will be ready to sail on 18 or 19 March N.S. He wants convoy for the troops.

The Pensionary of Holland has eight men-of-war ready to join Byng, at present lying at the Schoonveldt (viii. 35).

$\frac{3}{14}$ March. Cadogan to Sunderland :—Has asked Byng to provide convoy for the troops [previous letter], ' and, though I suppose he will make no difficulty about it, yet it would be convenient orders were despatched to him from the Admiralty for it ' (viii. 35).

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Admiralty Office, 4th March, 1707/8.

Sir,—This owns the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date with which I have acquainted the Prince and his Council.

I hope ere this comes to hand Captain Walker will be with you, he sailing from St. Helens yesterday in the forenoon, and with him the Bedford.

For fear the orders sent you last night by express should by any accident miscarry, I send you enclosed an attested copy of the same ; and have only to add, that 'tis generally believed the pretended Prince of Wales is at Dunkirk, and that the enemy's preparations are designed for Scotland.

I am, Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

J. BURCHETT.

4 March. Marlborough to Cadogan from St. James's:—Cadogan is not to embark his troops unless the enemy embark theirs. Thinks Byng's force superior to the enemy's.

5 March. Byng to Burchett from the Medway in the Downs:—Walker and his squadron have just arrived together with the Bedford from Portsmouth. Encloses Council of War's opinion (viii. 241).

COUNCIL OF WAR

At a consultation of Flag Officers held on board Her Majesty's Ship Medway in the Downs the 5th of March 1707/8.

PRESENT:—

Sir George Byng, Admiral of the Blue.
Sir John Jennings, Vice Admiral of the Red.
Lord Dursley, Vice Admiral of the Blue.
John Baker, Esq., Rear Admiral of the White.

Being this day joined by the Squadron commanded by Commodore Walker from the westward, upon considering his Royal Highness' orders to Sir George Byng of the 3rd instant. We are unanimously of opinion and do resolve that for the better preventing the enemy's ships which may be designed to join their squadron at Dunkirk, and for observing the motions of the enemy there, we do proceed, if wind and weather permits, with the whole fleet over to Graveline Pits on the 8th of this month (the tides then beginning to lift) and after having viewed the posture of the enemy there, to proceed with the greatest part of the fleet to lie off the north channel of Dunkirk, either to anchor there, or keep under sail as shall be

thought most safe; and at the same time make a detachment to cruise between Beachy and over towards Dieppe in the fairway that may intercept the enemy's ships which may come from the westward, or give us notice of their motions, that we may endeavour to prevent their joining.

G. Byng.
J. Jennings.
Dursley.
J. Baker.

FROM LORD GODOLPHIN

March 5, $170\frac{8}{9}$. [*sic*]

Sir,—I have the favour of yours of yesterday and was very glad to hear you were come back to the Downs, which I think is the best station for your purpose, as well as the safest at this time of the year.

What you write about the convoys for the East and West Indies is extremely reasonable and will, I hope, be executed accordingly.

As to the choking up of the harbour of Dunkirk, I am glad you have not absolutely rejected the thoughts of it, though I am very sensible the thing is liable to all the objections you mention, but at the same time I consider that if we cannot do something to restrain the liberty they have at present, of going out every way, and consequently with all winds, we must submit to be cruelly tormented with them all the summer, and be obliged to keep a much greater squadron to observe them than they have within the place. Whereas if we could but for this summer only spoil these channels into the Flemish Road which are the narrowest and consequently the easiest

choked, though the westernmost channel remained still open, yet when they had but one passage open we should then know how to place our ships that nothing could get in or out without our knowledge.

Now in case you have none of your pilots that have much knowledge of those sands, I believe Major General Cadogan would readily furnish you with some from Ostend, or the Dutch, when joined, might also help you from Zeeland, but should think the former of these shows the more probable. This service being of so great importance, I hope you the more easily forgive these unskilful suggestions from

Sir,

Your most faithful humble servant,

GODOLPHIN.

FROM THOMAS HOPKINS

Whitehall,
March 5th, 1707/8.

Sir,—I have received your favour of the 2nd instant, and am very glad of the opportunity you have given me of so pleasing a correspondence, which I shall always endeavour to cultivate and improve.

Our apprehensions of the descent from France are pretty well over, and we now almost wish they were out of Dunkirk, since we have already so good a fleet together, and so well commanded.

Yesterday morning we received an express from Ostend giving an account of the preparations of the enemy. The Pretender is certainly at Dunkirk, and his designs as certain upon Scotland; they have about 15 battalions to embark but

I don't hear of any horse. They say likewise there are 4 Scotch Lords (but don't name them) sent as hostages from Scotland, for the performance of the promises that country has made to the French king. They give out they intend to sail from Dunkirk by the 20th instant N.S. This news was communicated yesterday by the Queen's command to both Houses and both of them readily agreed to an address, which was presented to Her Majesty at St. James's, attended by both Houses. The Queen made them a long and satisfactory answer. I believe they will be both sent you with this letter, I having given order for it, if they can be obtained this evening.

You must excuse me sometimes if I am not able to write always to you with my own hand, having been troubled almost these three months with a defluxion of rheum in my eyes, which is very painful to me and has kept me from business.

Our friends grow stronger daily, and I don't doubt, but matters will suddenly bear well, as you or I can wish. Pray give my most humble service to Sir John Jennings, and believe me that I am with the greatest sincerity,

Sir,

Your most faithful humble Servant,

THOS. HOPKINS.[1]

There are near 7,000 men in Holland ready to embark; and the States have sent orders to their Admiralty to spare no cost or pains to fit out a good squadron for their convoy, which will be ready to sail as soon as the enemy.

[1] Secretary to Lord Sunderland. The Ministers were evidently anxious to give the widest possible publicity to the Address presented to the Queen by both Houses of Parliament. Sunderland in his letter to Cadogan of 5th March emphasizes its value propaganda on the Continent.

5 March. Sunderland to Cadogan :—

Has received Cadogan's letter of 14 March N.S. from Ostend. Thinks enemy are sure to sail, 'and, if they don't, I hope this undertaking of theirs will do us good in animating and uniting everybody here that wishes well to the Government.' Encloses copy of the unanimous Address of both Houses, 'which I hope will do good abroad by showing that the Pretender is not to expect a very great party here' (viii. 37).

$\frac{5}{16}$ March. Cadogan to Sunderland, enclosing advices :—

Hears from Paris that the French objective is Aberdeen, where 'the principal persons in the country' have promised to declare for the Pretender (viii. 37).

6 March. Byng to Burchett from the Medway in the Downs :—One of his scouts to the westward made a signal in the morning for seeing ships, and Byng is now under sail to investigate. He has just had a letter from Cadogan, and the messenger who brought it reports that enemy had embarked all their troops but disembarked them again when the England squadron appeared off Gravelines. But that since the English retired to the Downs the troops have been ordered on board a second time and may be ready to sail 'in a day or two more.' 'The wind is now fresh at N.W. by W. we are getting under sail and shall endeavour all we can to do what is for the service.' Is proceeding off Dunkirk. 'If we are fortunate to come up with the enemy have no doubt but we shall prove ourselves her Majesty's most faithful subjects, doing our duty in our stations for her service.' The Valeur and yacht are arrived (viii. 241–2).

6 March. Sunderland to Burchett :—H.M. approves of H.R.H.'s draft letter to Byng, which is as

follows :—H.R.H. has received Byng's letter of 5 March with Council of War's opinion which he approves of, ' unless it be that part which relates to your remaining in the Downs till the 8th of this month, for, as there is reason to think that the enemy may even upon the dead of the next tides and a fair wind proceed northward with such ships as are in the Flemish Road, so it is not doubted but you will take the most speedy and effectual means (as wind and weather may permit) to prevent them in any such design, and to intercept their ships coming from Brest to Dunkirk ' (viii. 38–9, also S.P. Dom. 44/210).

6 March. Prince George of Denmark to Sir William Jumper :—He is to send the Nottingham to join Byng and to send a frigate to convoy vessels from the Thames carrying 200 tuns of beer to Byng's squadron (viii. 218).

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Admiralty Office,
6th March, 1707/8.

Sir,—I have received your letter of yesterday's date this morning by express, and am to acquaint you that the Prince does approve of the resolution you have taken at a Council of War, unless it be that part of it which relates to your remaining in the Downs till the eighth of this month ; for as there is reason to think that the enemy may, even upon the dead of the neap tides, and a fair wind, proceed northward, with such ships as are in Flemish Road ; so is it not doubted but that you will take the most speedy and effectual means (as wind and weather may permit) to prevent

them in any such design, and to intercept their ships coming from Brest and Dunkirk.

I am,
Sir,
Your very humble Servant,
J. BURCHETT.

Endorsed: Received the 8th in the afternoon which came by express.

FROM CAPTAIN RICHARD KING

Captain King, Aide-de-Camp to Major General Cadogan, his letter of advice from Ostend dated the 18th March, N.S., at 10 in the morning. Received the 10th, O.S., at two in the afternoon.

Sir,—Major General Cadogan being gone from hence yesterday to Bruges I thought myself obliged to acquaint you that the enemy's fleet sailed from the Road of Dunkirk last night and is now riding in the Pits before Nieuport within a league and half of the town. As I passed by their fleet this morning in my way hither I could not count more than 24 sail. I am credibly informed here that all the troops, arms, provisions, etc. that were to be embarked at Dunkirk are aboard these vessels; which we imagine will extremely embarrass them in case they should come to any action.

All things for the embarkation of our troops are in readiness. But the Major-General I am afraid (as I had the honour of acquainting you yesterday) will not put them abroad till he hears

from you and what further motions the enemy shall be able to make with their fleet.

I have the honour to be with the greatest truth and respect,

Your most obliged and most obedient
humble Servt.,
RICHD. KING.

Ostend.
18th March N.S., 1708.
10 in the morning.

P.S.—Whatever advices you'll be pleased to send hither for the Major General the Governor of this town will forthwith send them to Bruges by an express.

The Captain of the vessel who will have the honour to deliver this to you can particularly inform you how the enemy's fleet lies.

7 March. Byng to Burchett from the Medway 'within Dungeness':—'It blew so fresh S.W. the day before yesterday and yesterday morning, that it put by the cruisers that we lay to the westward, from their stations; in the thick weather which was yesterday morning, they fell in with 11 sail, were near gun shot of some of them; they make five of them to be about 50 or 60 guns, and the others of smaller force, who chased them over in sight of us' [?].

Byng weighed and stood after these ships but they got into Graveline Pits untouched. [These are the ships referred to in his letter of 6 March.]

He thinks they are from 'west France' and intends 'to lie off the North Channel of Dunkirk to prevent their proceeding to sea from thence.' Anchored between Dover and Calais on night of 6 March but a fresh gale from E.N.E. starting before morning he was compelled 'to lie at anchor till the windward tide was made.' The weather was too bad to get into Dover Road, so

he bore away and anchored under Dungeness. Is concerned at being so far to leeward but will get back to his station off Dunkirk as soon as weather permit. Meanwhile the wind prevents the enemy coming out and going north (viii. 242).

7 March. Byng to Sunderland :—Same information as to Burchett (viii. 70).

7 March. Byng to Boyle :—Same information as to Burchett but more jaunty in tone. Referring to his annoyance at missing the eleven enemy ships going into Dunkirk, he says ' These are accidents men of our Proffession are lyable too, I will hope for a better chance to prove myself a servant of My Countries ' [*sic*] (S.P. Dom. 42/67).

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Admiralty Office.
8th March, 1707/8.

Sir,—This morning about eight o'clock I received a letter from you by express, giving an account of the ships being got into Graveline Pits which you gave chase to, and of your being obliged to anchor near Dungeness with the fleet under your command, but that you do intend to tide it off of Dunkirk if the winds hang contrary. His Royal Highness does very well approve of your so doing, in regard there is reason to believe the enemy will sail northward with the very first opportunity of a wind and that it is absolutely necessary you should be timely there, to prevent their getting out.

I am, Sir,
Your most humble Servant,
J. BURCHETT.

Endorsed : By an advice from Dover the 10th that noon.

8 March. Byng to Burchett from off Dungeness :— The weather is better though the wind still fresh at E.N.E. Is preparing to sail the next flood to try to work to windward off the North Channel of Dunkirk (viii. 242–3).

9 March. Marlborough to M. d'Auverquerque from St. James's :—The French at Dunkirk 'seem to persevere with their design, although they cannot ignore our superiority at sea.' . . . 'They will be still more encouraged by the junction of their Brest ships which admiral Byng "par les malheur des vents" was unable to stop getting into Dunkirk. At any rate we must hope we shall catch up with them, or at least follow them so closely that they will not have time to disembark their men and material.'

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Sir,—I am commanded by His Royal Highness to send you the enclosed copy of a proposal made to my Lord High Treasurer by Captain Ekins for sinking ships to block up the harbour and port of Dunkirk. If I understood my Lord Treasurer well on Sunday morning last, his Lordship has already sent you a copy of the same paper, or at least somewhat to the same purpose and that you did intend to consider at a Council of War what, if anything may be practicable to be done therein. This his Royal Highness would have you do, when you think it most convenient, and think it necessary that you should consult the Pilots in the fleet, and those of Ostend therein.

I send you herewith a copy of the last advices,[1]

[1] The advices which are given in *House of Lords MSS.*, viii. 219–20, state that the Dunkirk force consists of 7 ships from 54 to 60 guns, 8 frigates from 40 to 50 guns, and about 20 privateers from 24 to 30 guns and some transports. Fourbin has only one month's provisions, as he is to return after landing the expedition in Scotland.

received this afternoon from the Earl of Sunderland's office, relating to the naval preparations in France.

I hope the Lennox, Ipswich and Nottingham will suddenly join you from the Nore, and the Orford and Swiftsure from Portsmouth. They have orders to join you off of the North Channel of Dunkirk, if they meet you not in the Downs, or if they find you not there, to return and anchor at the Flats of the Foreland, or into the Downs, as the winds may be.

I am, Sir, Your very humble Servant,

J. BURCHETT.

Admiralty Office.
9th March, 1707/8.

These S.W. winds have carried you 'tis to be hoped off of Dunkirk by this time, or after the enemy, if they are gone out, but I am sorry it blows so very fresh.

Endorsed: By the Worcester the 19th.

9 March. Byng to Burchett from the Medway, '9 in the morning':—Has received Burchett's letter of 8 March. Is standing 'along the back of the sands between Calais and Dunkirk' with 'a fine gale at S. by W.' and in company with four Dutch ships under Captain Van Buren (viii. 243).

$\frac{9}{20}$ March. Cadogan to Sunderland:—

The enemy's fleet sailed about three in the morning to the northward. Since the 18th N.S. they have been at anchor at Nieuport Pits. He has sent a sloop with oars and a privateer to inform Byng.

The Pretender is on board with 15 battalions, 'which are so weak they do not make 5,000 effective men.' Cadogan is ready to embark his 10 battalions as soon as Byng's convoy arrives (viii. 39).

FROM MAJOR-GENERAL CADOGAN

N.S.
Ostend 20th March
$170\frac{7}{8}$

Sir,—Though I doubt not but you are informed by some of the frigates ordered to attend the enemy's motion, that they sailed this morning about two o'clock to the northward, yet I would not omit acquainting you of it, and at the same time desire you would please send such a convoy as may be necessary for the ten battalions I am ready to embark with here.

I conclude this will find you in pursuit of the enemy's fleet. I wish you all the success imaginable and have the honour to be with the perfect esteem and respect,

Your most obedient and
most obliged Humble Servant,
WM. CADOGAN.

We counted the enemy's fleet as they lay at anchor last night off Nieuport and found them as to number and force according to the list I sent you.

I humbly thank you for the honour of your letter which I had from Captain King.

9 March. Byng to Burchett from off Dunkirk:—Encloses Council of War opinion of the same day. 'I can only say more could not be done than we have done' (viii. 245).

COUNCIL OF WAR

At a Council of Flag Officers held on board Her Majesty's Ship Medway off Dunkirk, 9th March, 1707/8.

PRESENT :—

Sir George Byng, Admiral of the Blue.
Sir John Jennings, Vice Admiral of the Red.
Lord Dursley, Vice Admiral of the Blue.
John Baker, Esq., Rear Admiral of the White.

By intelligence this inst. received from Ostend, from Captain King, Aide-de-Camp to Major General Cadogan, dated the 18th instant, N.S., at 10 in the morning, giving an account the enemy were sailed from Flemish Road the night before, and were at the same time he sent away these letters, in the road of Nieuport, within a league and half of the town. The Master and men of the advice boat that brought this express acquainting us they saw them to the number of twenty seven sail lying there at an anchor ; at nine last night the advice boat came to an anchor, saw them put abroad their lights, and the signals by guns, are sure they sailed in the night, for they lay at an anchor until broad day this morning, and then saw none of the ships, but passing by Flemish Roads, they saw nine ships with their sails loose there.

Upon considering on this intelligence, and what advices we have had before both from Major General Cadogan and from his Royal Highness's Secretary, we are of opinion that the enemy's designs must be for Scotland, but not having any particular intelligence to what place,

it is our unanimous opinion, to leave Rear Admiral Baker with his division,[1] and the four Dutch men-of-war that joined us this morning, to proceed for Ostend Road, with directions for his holding correspondence with Major General Cadogan at Ostend, and either to proceed to convoy with the whole squadron English and the Dutch, and such others as shall join him, the troops that may be designed for England or Scotland, or to appoint such part of them as he shall judge sufficient, and with the rest to proceed after this fleet to join us, as upon considering the circumstances of affairs shall be thought reasonable. And it is further resolved and agreed on for us to proceed with the rest of the fleet in pursuit of the enemy, in the first place to the Road of Edinburgh seeking for them, and to govern ourselves, as upon intelligence we shall receive, for our better finding the enemy.

G. Byng.
J. Jennings.
Dursley.
J. Baker.

9 or 10 March [?] Baker to Burchett :—Encloses the letter from Captain King to Byng of $\frac{7}{18}$ March. At 6 in the evening [? date] ' just at Sir George Byng's parting from us ' [for Scotland ?] a cruiser reported 8 or 9 sail lying at Dunkirk ready for sailing and one coming out, which the Worcester chased [where to ?]. Obliged to anchor by hard S.S.W. wind. [This part appears

[1] Monmouth
Crown
Bonaventure
St. Albans
Gosport
Cruiser
Dragon
Deberehatt
Comper
De Ann
Ostenwych

to have been written on 9 March.] Continuation of letter 10 March [?] about 4 in the afternoon :—' Wind S.E. is going into Ostend to get intelligence to send to Byng.' ' If the enemy's ships remain stronger in Dunkirk than I am ' will not be able to spare a ship to tell reinforcements ordered to the Downs where Byng has gone. Hopes H.R.H. ' will give directions as proper.' [Letter ends ' dated on board the Monmouth off Dunkirk 9 March [?] about 6 in the evening '] (viii. 247).

Enclosure 1.—Ships with Byng.

Shrewsbury	Chatham	Lark
Medway	Advice	Tartar
Falkland	August	Mermaid
Antelope	Roebuck	Lyme
Leopard	Ludlow Castle	Rye
Adventure	Berwick	Kinsale
Dreadnought	Salisbury [see Index]	Queenborough
Worcester	Mary	Penzance
Bedford	Exeter	Squirrel
Canterbury	Dover	Glasgow
Monck	Jersey	Hunter, fireship

9 March. Enclosure 2.—Byng to Baker from the Medway off Dunkirk. Baker is to take command of the following ships.

Monmouth	Gosport	Deberehatt (38)
Crown	Cruiser	Comper (36)
Bonaventure	Dragon	de Ann (36)
St. Albans		Ostenwych (52)

He is to go into the Road of Ostend and arrange for the convoy of Cadogan's troops ' to any place of England or Scotland.' He is to use all or part of his force for this as he thinks fit. If he only uses part, the rest including Baker himself are to join Byng off Edinburgh ' or such other place as you shall by reasonable intelligence hear where the fleet is ' (viii. 247).

9 March. Enclosure 3.—Byng to Baker from the Medway off Dunkirk. If upon conferring with Cadogan Baker finds he is stronger than the enemy with the force Byng leaves him, he is to send all the reinforcements north to join Byng.

These are :—

Swiftsure	Anglesea
Orford	Tilbury
Ipswich	Breda
Swallow	Lennox
Nottingham	Weymouth

(viii. 247–48).

FROM THOMAS HOPKINS

Whitehall, 11th March 1707/8.

Sir,—I am still obliged to make use of another hand to assure you of my respects. I have none of your favours to acknowledge since what you were pleased to write me from the Downs.

You will perceive by the enclosed papers that this incident of an attempt from France has awakened us, and has raised in both Houses of Parliament such a spirit that in all probability the whole nation will feel the good effects of it for many ages. All possible preparations are making to prevent the enemy's designs, and we hope in a very short time, what with the troops we have at home and in Scotland, and those that are coming from Ireland and the Netherlands, to have a body of 3,000 horse and dragoons and 20,000 foot, regular forces. Your having success would go a great way towards baffling the endeavours of the French ; it is what we all pray for, and in a

particular manner he, who beside the public good is engaged to do so by the zeal and affection wherewith he professes himself to be, Sir,

Your most humble and obedient Servant,

THO. HOPKINS.

I have sent you the resolutions of the Commons and the heads of an address to the Queen, the latter end of which, you will perceive at when it is issued [*sic*].

11 March. Sunderland to Cadogan :—Acknowledges Cadogan's letter of 9/20 March and is 'very sorry that the squadron from Dunkirk is sailed ; however I hope Sir George Byng will come up time enough with them to keep them from landing, and that the squadron he has left behind under Mr. Baker will be sufficient to convoy the troops you are sending safe over to England.' The troops are to proceed to Hull for orders and if none are there they are to go on to Tynemouth or Holy Island, 'where they shall certainly find their orders, and Lieut. General Withers ready to command them,' Cadogan is not to come with them himself. The enemy have apparently 15 hours start of Byng (viii. 39–40).

11 March. Marlborough to Cadogan from St. James's :—

Hears that enemy have sailed and that Byng 'had notice of about ten o'clock the same morning' and detached ships to Ostend for Cadogan's troops, 'and immediately proceeded after them [the enemy], so that we are in hopes, as the wind has been since, that we may come up with them before they reach Scotland.'

Cadogan's troops are to sail under the command of Brigadier Sabine, if his regiment is one of those which embarks, if not the senior colonel is to take command. The troops are

to go to Hull for orders, from whence if they find none they are to go on to Tynemouth, 'Lieutenant General Withers being ordered immediately into those parts to take them under his command.' Cadogan is to return to Brussels, to attend his duty there and to procure intelligence.

[Joseph Sabine (1662 ?–1739), General and Governor of Gibraltar, 1730.]

12 March. Marlborough to Lord Leven, from St. James's:

The enemy has put to sea with about 5,000 men and the Pretender, 'notwithstanding our fleet's being at hand and superior in force.' Byng is chasing them and should be able 'to join them' before they can land their troops and supplies. English troops are being sent north, meanwhile Leven must do the best he can of 'those few' he has, making the city and castle of Edinburgh and the castle of Stirling his 'chief care.' Byng intends to go straight to the mouth of the Forth so that Leven should have boats ready to give him intelligence and orders if there are any.

12 March. Mayor of Berwick to Sunderland:—He reports 'now off this place, standing northward, about 30 sail of tall ships, several of which are judged to be of good force.'

[These ships were Byng's squadron.]

(viii. 40).

13 March. Hopkins to Burchett:—He returns draft of instructions for Baker by command of Sunderland (Admiralty In-letters from Secretaries of State, 1/4091, P.R.O.).

[These instructions are the ones immediately following.]

PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK TO REAR-ADMIRAL BAKER

You are hereby required and directed forthwith upon your receipt hereof, to make the best of your way to Tynemouth Bar, with Her Majesty's ships under your command and the transport ships with troops which you brought with you from Ostend, and when you come off the said Bar, you are (if you do not find orders there) to continue there with the aforesaid transport ships till further orders, but if you should be there credibly informed that the French had landed their forces in the North of Scotland, you are then to make the best of your way to the Frith in order to land the forces at Leith, or as near Edinburgh as may be.

But in regard there are several dismounted troopers on board the transports, you are to send a vessel with them to Harwich, if you can conveniently, their horses being now in Essex. And in case Rear-Admiral Baker shall himself proceed with the transport ships and that the enemy ships said to be in Flemish Road, were there when he sailed from Ostend, he is forthwith to return with Her Majesty's ships off of Dunkirk, but if the enemy ships shall be gone from Dunkirk when he sails from Ostend, he is then to make the best of his way to the Downs. But if he has detached any of Her Majesty's ships to be convoy to the transports, and continues himself off of Dunkirk then the Commander-in-Chief of the said ships, is hereby required (after having landed the troops) to make the best of his way to a proper station off of Dunkirk and join the said Rear-Admiral Baker, and in case the Lennox, Ipswich and Nottingham

shall be in your company, you are to bring them back with you.

Given under my hand this 13th of March, 1707/8.

GEORGE.

[These orders were sent to Dover and duplicates were also sent to Harwich, Margate, Yarmouth, Tynemouth and Hull. Apparently Burchett wrote a letter to Baker on 12th March containing the main points in the above orders as signifying H.R.H.'s pleasure, and he also sent a covering letter on 13th March with the orders themselves (H. of L. MSS. viii. 221–2). The curious wording of the orders is due to the fact that they were also intended for the Commander-in-Chief of the ships coming with the transports from Ostend, supposing that Baker did not come with them in person (see H. of L. MSS. viii. 223).]

13 March. Burchett to Governor of Tynemouth Castle:— Enclosing a copy of orders for Baker or for C. in C. of transports carrying troops from Ostend (viii. 223).

13 March. Mayor of Berwick to Sunderland, enclosing intelligence from the Bailiff of Dunbar:— At about noon on 12 March a frigate of about 36 guns passed Dunbar and entered the Forth to view the ships at Leith. At about 4 P.M. another frigate of about 24 guns appeared and cruised to and fro as if waiting for intelligence from the shore. At 6 P.M. 'a great many ships' appeared, one with a white flag 'hoisted on [?] topmast head.' 'These ships fired several guns in the night and made false fire.' Ninety to a hundred ships have been discerned [? day and time] 'standing to the northward.'

The ships are disappearing, steering N.N.E. The Mayor of Berwick suggests that this report indicates that the ships seen were the French (viii. 41).

13 March. Byng to Burchett from the Medway off Edinburgh :—He anchored at the mouth of the Forth on the night of 12 March and sent a boat to the Isle of May for intelligence. From it he learnt that the French had anchored near there during the afternoon. The French ' sent one ship up into Leith Road, which had a flag at the main-topmast head, they [the people of the Island] thought it a blue one, but I rather think it might be the standard.' ' They heard several guns fire, which were in the manner of a salute.'

That morning (the 13th) Byng's squadron sighted the French and are in chase of them at the moment of writing. The French ship which went up to Leith the day before is only two leagues away, but shows no flag, she seems of 60 guns. One of their ships carried a flag at the main-topmast head. ' They stand from us and we after them with all the sail we can. They have this advantage of us, that their ships are clean and most of ours are foul. We can say no more for ourselves than that we will do all that is possible for men to do.'

If the enemy gets clear he and Jennings have decided to return to the Forth again (viii. 248).

COUNCIL OF WAR

At a Council of War of Flag Officers held on board the Medway off Buchan Ness. 14th March, 1707/8.

PRESENT :—

Sir George Byng, Admiral of the Blue.
Sir John Jennings, Vice Admiral of the Red.
Lord Dursley, Vice Admiral of the Blue.

This morning seeing but eighteen of the enemy's ships and those as far as we can discover them from the mast-head in the East of us, there being

but little wind, and they clean ships, have no prospect of coming up with them ; the Shrewsbury (and the Advice, whose masts are disabled) being as far as we can see them from our mast-head to the S.S. Westward, and having the Dover and Salisbury prize to refit in their masts and rigging that are wounded, we are of opinion that we lie to and fro here this day, to get our fleet together, and put the disabled ships in a condition for service, and so soon as that is done, to make the best of our way to the Frith of Edinburgh, which we not only look upon as the place where the enemy's designs were chiefly bent, but for the security of the North part of Britain, that port should principally be guarded from them, so likewise our appearing with the fleet there, will not only encourage and support Her Majesty's faithful subjects, but dishearten such as shall have any thoughts of daring to rebel. And on our arrival as we find affairs there, that we come to such further resolutions as the nature of the service, on which we are sent, will require.

G. Byng.
J. Jennings.
Dursley.

ADVICES SENT TO LORD LEVEN

My Lord,—There has been a fleet of forty sail and upwards seen at sea betwixt Montrose and this place since Thursday last. Yesterday they were before Stonehaven twelve mile to the southward of this, and one of them came into the Bay there and fired some guns and sounded with trumpet and Hautboy, and this morning they came before this place and have lain in this Bay all day. We sent a boat and some seamen and others

therein to view them, who went as near them as they could and discovered five men of war betwixt fifty and sixty guns, and betwixt thirty and forty other ships. They had out no colours, but the seamen are persuaded that they are French ships by their build and sails and we are very apprehensive that they design to land here. There are no forces hereabouts and we have ground to fear the country as well as the French. We thought it our duty to acquaint your Lordship hereof that you may communicate the same to the Lords of Privy Council. We shall acquaint your Lordship from time to time what we learn more of this fleet and we hope the Government will provide for the relief of this poor country.

We are, my Lord,
Your Lordship's most humble Servant,
Sic subscribitur,
JOHN GORDON, Provost.
JAMES CATTANACH, Baillie.
ALEXANDER OREM, Baillie.
ROBERT STEWART, Baillie.
JOHN ROSS, Baillie.

Aberdeen, 14th March
six o'clock at night 1708.

Directed to the Lord Advocate.

Endorsed : Received the 15th.

14 March. Prince George of Denmark to C. in C. Downs : He is to go to Ostend with not less than three and not more than five of the ships, Lennox, Ipswich, Nottingham, Weymouth, Swallow, Dunwich, Glasgow, and take charge of the troops to be embarked by Cadogan. He is to escort them to Tynemouth and wait there with them for further orders, unless he hears that the

enemy have landed in Scotland, which case he is to land the troops at Leith and then return to the Downs.

If the Orford, Swiftsure, Torbay, Sheerness, Experiment or Tilbury are present he may choose ships from them but in no case is he to take more than five of these with him to Tynemouth (viii. 224–5).

15 March. Byng to Burchett from the Medway in Leith Road :—'We chased the enemy to the northward of Buchan Ness, sometimes with reasonable hopes of coming up with them. The Dover and Ludlow-Castle being the only clean sailing ships we had, they were the first that came up with part of the enemy's squadron, passing by some of the smaller to engage some of the larger ships, and stop them till they could be relieved. They attacked two or three of their ships, among which was the Salisbury. They did not part with them till more of our ships arrived, but worked their ship in a handsome manner, to cut them off from the rest of the Fleet. But in the darkness of the night they all got out of sight, except the Salisbury, who pulling in among our headmost ships, the Leopard entered men on board her.'

The prisoners stated that the squadron carried 12 battalions and that Fourbin and the Pretender were on board the Mars. No Brest ships reached Dunkirk, our scouts had mistaken privateers for them.

On the morning of 14 March 18 enemy ships were observed to the E.N.E. but too far off to catch. Byng lay to all that day off Buchan Ness and then went south to Leith. (Lediard, page 829.)

15 March. Byng to Sunderland :—Enemy has disappeared, in absence of orders from H.R.H. thinks his squadron should return to the Downs (viii. 70–1).

15 March. Mayor of Berwick to Sunderland enclosing intelligence from the Bailiff of Dunbar :—On 12 March between 1 and 2 P.M. a frigate of 32 guns came up to Pittenweem and made 'the usual signal to speak the place.' A boat went off which the frigate asked to provide a pilot for Leith Road. Three men from the boat therefore boarded the frigate which immediately bore away out of the Forth. The remaining boatmen who returned reported that they saw five drums on the frigate's quarters 'and 40 men in good habit walking on the quarter deck.' The frigate also asked if there were any English warships in the Forth.

The same night a French squadron of 24 warships anchored on Skait Road, near Crail, and weighed again next morning, 13 March. 'A boat from Crail went aboard the Admiral's ship of 70 guns and they owned themselves to be French (and that they had their prisoner on board as they term him); they added further that they intended to land somewhere in the Firth, but seemed afraid of the English squadron. They treated their men [the boatmen] civilly and gave them a crown to drink.'

The same morning another boatman sailed through the squadron unchallenged; he reported that all the ships were French, 'whereof sixteen were tall ships above five [*sic*] guns [1] and the seventeen small frigates and privateers.'

The French were at that time [?] standing south with the wind at W.S.W. but at 8 A.M. they were seen to be signalling and then all tacked and headed north together with the ships which were in the Firth, as Byng's squadron of 24 sail could be seen coming up from the south, crowding sail. Both squadrons dis-

[1] Probably a mistake by the editors of the *House of Lords MSS.*, although it is possible that the mistake is in the manuscript, itself a copy. In any case the editors should have queried it.

appeared to the north but heavy firing was heard from 4 to 7 P.M. which was again heard next morning but from a greater distance. The English ships appeared taller than the French and were evidently the ones sighted from Berwick.

On the morning of 14 March six tall ships came out of the Forth, presumably Dutch East Indiamen. They were approached by five other ships from the south which however immediately tacked and made off to the south again, the Indiamen also going south apparently undisturbed.

Another enclosure from Dundee dated 13 March states that a squadron of 26 sail appeared off Dundee at 4 P.M. on 12 March standing south and the next morning were seen retreating before another squadron of '24 large ships' (viii. 41–3).

15 March. Leven to Sunderland:—Byng's squadron anchored in Leith Road at 5 P.M. that day.

Captain Owen of the Medway reported that they sighted the enemy at 10 A.M. on 13 March and that one of their ships got with the enemy's rear by 4 P.M. and engaged it. During the night Captain Gordon's ship [Leopard] captured the Salisbury without firing a shot.

Byng's ships were not clean enough to catch the enemy and to force a general action. Owen thought the enemy would probably return to Dunkirk, the wind being N.E. They were sighted again on the morning of 14 March but a long way off and soon disappeared again (viii. 43).

16 March. Byng to Burchett from Leith Road:—Covering letter to the council of war opinion which follows. Says 'of our taking only the Salisbury, the rest getting away by favour of the night, and our want of clean ships, for had we had such, I think most of that squadron had fallen into our hands' (viii. 251).

Prisoners taken on board the Salisbury. They included :—

' M. le Chevalier de Nangis, Captain of the ship.'
11 other officers and warrant officers.
3 surgeons.
1 chaplain.
' The Sieur de Montier, the King's Clerk.'
30 servants.
' Little boys, about 20.'
The ships company of 250 men.

The troops on board included :—

le Marquis de Levi, Lieutenant-General.
11 French officers.
15 Irish officers, all Lieutenants of O'Brian's Regiment, formerly Lord Clare's.
187 men of the Regiment of Bearne.
31 men of O'Brian's Regiment.

The following Englishmen were also on board :—

' My Lord Clermont, Col. in the Regt. of Lee.'
' Mr. Middleton, Capt. in the Regt. of Nugal [Nugent].'
' My Lord Griffin.'

(viii. 206–7.)

[Lord Clermont and Charles Middleton were the sons of Charles second Earl of Middleton (1640 ?–1719) who had been Secretary of State under James II and who was one of the chief organisers of the expedition.

Edward Griffin was created Baron Griffin of Braybrooke Castle, Northants, by James II in 1688. His nephew John Whitewell (1719–97) assumed the name of Griffin in 1749 and in 1784 succeeded to the title of Baron Howard de Walden, through an aunt, and in 1796 was promoted to Field Marshal in the Army].

COUNCIL OF WAR

At a Council of War held on board Her Majesty's Ship Medway the 16th of March $170\frac{7}{8}$.

PRESENT :—

Sir George Byng, Admiral of the Blue.
Sir John Jennings, Vice Admiral of the Red.
Lord Dursley, Vice Admiral of the Blue.

Having chased the enemies' squadron off of Buchan Ness, where we last saw them, as far as we could see them from our mast head to the Eastward of that place, and judging as the winds have been northerly and strong N. Easterly yesterday, they could not land their men on any part of this coast, but now the wind coming about to the S. Westward and taking into consideration where the enemy may probably attempt to land or which way we may reasonably proceed to prevent their design ; it is our opinion that if we should go northward and the winds should blow strong S. Westerly, it may put us by recovering this port again ; and they being probably drove to the southward of this port, which we think of the greatest consequence to secure, and since we found them at an anchor in the mouth of the Firth, have reason to think their design was intended for this place, therefore do resolve to remain here till we have intelligence of their returning on the coast again, or we receive answer to the express sent last night to the Secretary to His Royal Highness, which gave an account of what has happened hitherto, or receive orders for our further proceedings, and that we keep scouts

out between this and Aberdeen to endeavour to gain intelligence and use the best means we can to have intelligence from the shore.

G. Byng.
J. Jennings.
Dursley.

16 March. Marlborough to the Pensionary from St. James's :—Byng's non arrival off Ostend to escort the troops 'is very disappointing.' Thinks the enemy must have sailed from Dunkirk and that he is in pursuit of them. Hopes Dutch will send some warships to convoy the troops. 'While we are waiting for them, we are strengthening ourselves in Scotland with foot, horse and dragoons. The Queen even thinks of bringing seven squadrons of horse from the Netherlands, in case we cannot stop the enemy from landing.'

'P.S. At last we hear from the Admiral that he was in pursuit of the enemy on the Scottish coast last Saturday.' [Translation.]

16 March. Baker to Burchett from the Monmouth enclosing opinion of council of war held in Ostend Road :—

He reached Ostend on 14 March and sent Cadogan, then at Bruges, letters from Byng. Cadogan arrived next morning at Ostend and they began the embarkation. Several of the bilanders [two-masted Hoys] being too small to act as transports Baker distributed 1,600 on board the English and Dutch warships. He is all ready and hopes to sail on the morning of 17 March.

On 11 March was joined by the Worcester, and on 15 March by the Glasgow and Cruiser, the last named bringing letters from Burchett of 11th, 12th, and 13th March, and orders from H.R.H. of 13 March. Thinks these orders contradictory as they tell him to return off

Dunkirk if the enemy has not sailed, but that if they have sailed he is ' to proceed to the Downs.' Thinks Burchett (H.R.H.) is assuming his squadron to be divided, whereas having only been joined by the Glasgow, of those mentioned in his orders, he does not feel justified in dividing his force.

Council of War called to elucidate Baker's orders unanimously decides in favour of taking their whole force to Tynemouth, together with the transports (viii. 248–51).

FROM LORD LEVEN

[17 March 170$\frac{7}{8}$.]

Much honoured Sir,—Since my coming to Leith the enclosed copy of a letter from Montrose was given me, which though not very material I thought fit to let you know.

I have despatched your packet for London and according to your desire I despatched some persons to the northward for more intelligence. So oft as I get any news you shall be further informed. I am now in a hurry and therefore you shall have no more trouble at present from

Sir, Your most humble
& obedient Servant,
LEVEN.

Leith.
Wednesday, 3 o'clock.

ENCLOSURE.

ADVICE FROM MONTROSE SENT TO LORD NORTHESK

About twelve of the clock yesterday six of the boat's crew belonging to this place, which were taken by the French on Friday, were put ashore about twelve miles benorth of this place, in the ship's sloop that took them away, she having been

separated from the rest of the fleet in the night before. The other two seamen, there having been eight in the boat, were kept on board the French Admiral of about 70 guns, wherein it is said is the pretended Prince of Wales. They further inform that the French waited a part of their fleet, on Friday, which made them hover so long on the coast that they, expecting their coming, but were resolved to land in the Firth of Forth next day without them [*sic*], that there were only twenty six sail of the French they saw, whereof seven were men of war, all the rest privateers from 20 to 36 guns, that they were in great consternation on their discovery of the British Fleet and threw a great deal of their provisions, water casks overboard, that all the Fleet had soldiers and ammunition and small arms aboard, that the ship they were in bore 21 [?] guns, six of which were only mounted, till yesterday morning, and that she had aboard 350 land soldiers, whereof many were Irish, there were 15 men of war seen last night off St. Andrews, what they were is not known certainly here.

Montrose.
15th March.

17 March. Baker to Burchett from the Monmouth [off Ostend] about 10 A.M. :—

Has unmoored and is getting under sail with the transports, ' with a favourable gale at S.E., which I will endeavour to improve every minute of it, so hope you will soon hear of my arrival at Tynemouth Bar ' (viii. 252).

17 March [?] Baker to Sunderland [presumably from Ostend and no date given] :—There are 5,426 troops embarked in the transports and between 1,600 and 1,700 in the English and Dutch warships.

List of ships.

Monmouth	70	Crown	50
St. Albans	50	Gosport	40
Bonaventure	50	Cruiser	24
Dragon	50	Glasgow	24

4 Dutch men of war. 1 of 52 guns
1 ,, 44 ,,
1 ,, 38 ,,
1 ,, 36 ,,

[The Editors, presumably, indicate that there is a list of English and Dutch warships and 25 sail of transports 'in the margin.' No indication is given as to the names of the ships or how they differ from the list above] (viii. 44).

17 March. Cadogan to Sunderland from Ostend :—says Baker arrived off Ostend on the night of $\frac{14}{25}$ March with 6 English and 4 Dutch warships. The troops were embarked early next morning but could not sail owing to N.E. wind ; but 'are all now under sail with the fairest wind [S.E.] and the finest weather could be wished.'

Has received Marlborough's orders for sending another battalion and 20 cannon, will try to find shipping for them at Flushing and warships as convoy, 'now ready in Zealand' [Dutch ?] (viii. 43–4).

17 March. News Letter from Berwick :—Gives an account of Byng's chase and the capture of the Salisbury [see Introductory Note] (Elliot Hodgkin MSS. p. 222, Hist. MSS. Com.).

17 March. Prince George of Denmark to Baker :—There being reason to think that Byng may come up with and engage the enemy, Baker is to wait for further orders before landing the troops. If Byng engages them some of them may try to escape to Dunkirk and Baker is to return off there and try to intercept them (viii. 227–8). [These orders were apparently not sent off till 19 March ; see Burchett's covering letter of that date.]

PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK TO REAR-ADMIRAL BAKER

[Copy]

Whereas Her Majesty hath signified Her pleasure, to the officer who commands the troops with which you are sailed, northward from Ostend, that he does not put the said troops on shore, unless he receives certain intelligence that the enemy's are landed in Scotland, and that if on the contrary, he understands from Sir George Byng, or the Earl of Leven who commands in that part of Great Britain, that they are gone back to France, he does return with the said troops to Ostend, and puts them on shore again there; you are therefore hereby required and directed to govern yourself accordingly, with regard to the said troops, with Her Majesty's ships under your command and in case you shall return to Ostend you are so soon as the transport ships shall be safe there, to repair with the ships you command to such station off of Dunkirk, as may be most proper, for the intercepting any of the enemy's ships, which may be coming into or going out of that port, sending an account to my Secretary of your station, and of your proceedings for my information.

Given under my hand this 18th March 1707.

GEORGE.

[These orders are addressed to Tynemouth, duplicates being sent to Hull and Berwick.]

18 March. Sunderland to Burchett :—With reference to preceding orders to Baker, H.M. wishes the addition to be made that if Baker meets Byng he is to acquaint Byng with his instructions and to put himself under Byng's orders (viii. 45, also Adm. In-Letters from Secretaries of State, 1/4091 P.R.O.).

18 March. Burchett to Baker :—Giving effect to Sunderland's letter preceding, 'in pursuance of her Majesty's pleasure, I am commanded by his Royal Highness . . . ' (viii. 226).

18 March. Burchett to Baker :—He has just received Baker's letters of 16 and 17 March since sending off the Prince's orders. News of Byng's partial action has arrived. If Baker hears for certain that Byng has completely beaten the enemy so that they cannot land, he is to disembark the troops again at Ostend and take up his station off Dunkirk (viii. 226–7).

ADVICE SENT TO LORD NORTHESK

Copy of a letter from James Milne of Boirallie[?] to the Earl of Northesk, the 18th March 1708, at Stonehaven.

My Lord,—This morning passed by this place about twenty sail of men of war and about nine, two more passed to the northward, since which time we have one Aberdeen man come hither and one William Fourth a burgher in this burgh from Edinburgh, who tell us that Sir George Byng was yester night at five o'clock at night, lying in Leith road, so that we could not imagine what they were.

I am, My Lord
Your Lordship's humble servant
sic subscribitur JAMES MILNE.

19 March. Burchett to Leven :—A covering letter enclosing the letter and orders to Byng which follow and telling Leven of their contents. Moreover Baker has been ordered not to land the troops unless Leven tells him that the enemy have landed in Scotland, in which case the troops are to be landed 'as near Edinburgh as may be' (viii. 228).

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Whereas I am informed by your letter of the 15th instant, that you have left off chasing the enemy's fleet and returned into the Firth of Edinburgh with Her Majesty's ships under your command, you are hereby required and directed (in pursuance of Her Majesty's pleasure) to make all possible despatch in getting out from the Firth again ; and whereas it is necessary that the ships named in the margin [1] hereof should be detached from you, that so they may proceed with the several foreign trades which they are appointed to convoy, you are therefore to put on board the said ships, all the prisoners which were taken in the Salisbury, and then direct the Commander in Chief of the said foreign convoys to proceed to Tynemouth Bar and there join the Monmouth and Cruiser, which I have ordered Rear-Admiral Baker to add to him. When he is so joined, you are to order him to proceed into the River Humber, and that he delivers into the charge of the Commanding Officer at Hull all the French soldiers and non-commission officers, and having so done, that he proceeds to the Downs, and remains there till further orders, and puts on shore at Dover Castle (into the charge of the officer for sick and wounded and exchange the prisoners there) all the sea commission officers and seamen taken in the said ship Salisbury, but as for the Chevalier de Nangis, Lord Griffin, Lord Clermont, and Mr. Middleton, you are to direct him to cause them to be kept on board different ships in the Downs, till further order, and the three last close prisoners ; and the Commission officers in the land service which are prisoners, he is likewise

[1] Jersey Roebuck Adventure
Leopard Lark

to keep on board the ships in the Downs, until he receives further directions concerning them.

With the rest of Her Majesty's ships under your command (as also the Worcester, which ship is sent to join you) you are to use your utmost endeavours to guard and secure the Coast of Scotland till further order, according to the advices you shall receive of the enemy, from hence, or in those parts, in regard there is no present occasion for your coming with the fleet this way, there being a squadron gone to cruise off of Dunkirk, since Rear Admiral Baker sailed with the ships under his command northward with the troops ; and in case the ships which remain with you shall be in want of any species of provisions, you are to cause them to be furnished therewith from the foreign convoys.

In case you can man the Salisbury, either out of the fleet under your command, or by entertaining [?] seamen in Scotland, you are to do the same, and take her to sea with you, and you are from time to time to give an account of your proceedings to my Secretary for my information.

Given under my hand this 19th March 1707/8.

GEORGE.

Endorsed : Received by express the 23rd at noon.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Admiralty Office.
19th March 1707/8

Sir,—This morning at nine o'clock I received your letter by express, dated from Leith Road the 15th instant, and I did immediately read it to His Royal Highness. It hath been also considered by Her Majesty at a Committee of Council,

and pursuant to what was there determined, I send you herewith His Royal Highness his orders for your further proceedings with Her Majesty's fleet under your command.

There will be orders this day sent by express to Rear Admiral Baker, who is sailed towards Tynemouth with the troops from Ostend, not to land the troops till further order from him, unless the Earl of Leven sends him an account that the enemy have put on shore their forces in Scotland, in which case he is forthwith to proceed to the Firth of Edinburgh and endeavour to land our troops as near to that city as possibly may be.

You will find by the Prince his orders how the prisoners are to be disposed of which were taken in the Salisbury, and the Officers which you have appointed to that ship the Prince will confirm.

I am heartily sorry that you had not the good fortune to come with the enemy, so as to attack them, but hope if they come on the coast of Scotland, and attempt to land their troops, you will be able to give a good account of them.

I am, Your very humble Servant,

J. BURCHETT.

I desire you will send me an account from time to time where orders may most probably meet with you.

Addressed: to Leith Road.

Endorsed: Received by Express the 23rd at Noon.

19 March. Burchett to Baker:—Informing Baker of H.R.H.'s orders to Byng of 19 March and enclosing H.R.H.'s orders to Baker, which are dated 17 March [for which see under that date] (viii. 228).

19 March. Prince George of Denmark to Baker :— Notwithstanding former orders Baker is to remain at Tynemouth with the troops unless he hears from Leven that the enemy have landed in Scotland, in which case he is to land the troops as near Edinburgh as possible, 'and as soon as' the Jersey, Leopard, Roebuck, Lark and Adventure, (which Byng is ordered to reinforce him with), reach Tynemouth, he is to add the Monmouth and Cruiser to them and send all seven to the Downs, touching at Hull (viii. 228).

19 March. Prince George of Denmark to Captain Griffith of the Swiftsure, off Dunkirk :—He is to be reinforced by the Torbay, Lennox, Ipswich, Nottingham, Norwich, Tilbury, Sheerness and Dunwich, and with them is to proceed off Dunkirk and to try to intercept the enemy on their return from the north (viii. 230).

19 March. Sunderland to Byng :—'I am very glad you have got one of their best ships, and I can't but think the chase you have given them has prevented their attempting any landing. I am sure if we escape this attempt, it is entirely owing to the zeal and diligence you have shown in getting out the ships and making such haste up with them' (S. P. Dom. 42/67. P.R.O.).

19 March. Sunderland to Leven :—'I am sorry Sir George Byng could not reach [1] the enemy so as to make a thorough engagement, however I hope the success he has had and the chase he has given them will effectually prevent their attempting to land. This we shall be certain of in three or four days, for if by that time they do not attempt landing we may conclude they are gone back to Dunkirk.' Reckons that troops from Ostend are now at Tynemouth where they will be ordered to stay till further orders, but if enemy

[1] The *House of Lords MSS.* version (viii. 45) gives *watch* instead of *reach*, an obvious mistake.

lands 'in any part of Scotland' they will be sent to Leith Road (S. P. Dom. 42/67. P.R.O.).

20 March. Prince George of Denmark to Captain Walker :—He is to go to Deal and then go out to take command of the force being organised by Griffith [see orders to Griffith of 19 March] which is to intercept the enemy returning to Dunkirk. Walker is to hoist 'a distinguishing pennant' on board any ship he thinks 'most convenient' (viii. 231).

FROM LORD LEVEN

Edinburgh. 21 March.

Much honoured Sir,—By the letters from London of 16th which came to my hand this morning I am informed that Admiral Baker is sailed northward in pursuit of eleven more French ships that have got out off Dunkirk ; this account came to London on Sunday last being the 12th. This I thought fit to acquaint you of. There were no letters in my packet for you ; your letters dated from the Firth the 11th were carried to London before my letters of 16th came away. I am by them also informed that there were some of Her Majesty's ships to go from the Downs on the 16th to Ostend to convoy over the forces from thence. I send you also the copy of a letter which just now came to my hand which I suppose must be Admiral Baker or the ships last come out of Dunkirk, for I cannot believe it is Monsieur Fourbin's Squadron.

I am, much honoured Sir,

Your most humble & obedient Servant,

LEVEN.

FROM REAR-ADMIRAL BAKER

Dear Sir,—This comes to tell you of my being arrived here with the troops in the enclosed list which are under the command of Brigadier Sabine which is now on board me. I likewise enclose you a copy of His Royal Highness his orders how I am to proceed, which depends on your information, or the Earl of Leven's, and I shall remain without Tynemouth Bar with the men of war and transports, till I hear from you. The Cruiser and Glasgow joined me in Ostend Road with the enclosed packets on the 15th instant, with an answer of having received your letters, and mine, with the other accounts, and I likewise received the Prince's orders which are very intricked [*sic*] ; I have met with very troublesome weather, and rode a very hard gale off of Ostend, and it was the 14th instant before I could get into Ostend Road, and when I came there, Major General Cadogan was not there, nor any of the soldiers, but upon my express to him [at] Bridges [Bruges ?] he despatched everything, as soon as possible, but the transports which was provided, was [*sic*] not in a condition to proceed this way, being many of them flat bottomed bilanders, so I was obliged to take on board our ships above 1,700 men and indeed there is several of the transports that are [*sic*] now with me that complain very much, and some of them are sad tools, but I'll endeavour as soon as possible to get them ready to proceed to you, or to turn back to Ostend, according as I shall meet with your intelligence, but I have been cursedly troubled with these transports ; since my coming here I am informed you have the good fortune to see the French fleet, but the

misfortune of not coming up with them, only the Salisbury, which is a great mortification to me. The Worcester joined me on Thursday the 11th instant who gave me that he chased the French man of war of about 50 or 60 guns, but lost sight of him that night and as soon as he joined me I gave him orders as you directed; but he was driven back and obliged to anchor, and drove near some sand where he was, which obliged him, as I am informed, to cut away his anchors to save his ship, and get into Marg^{t}. Road to procure more, but as to the ships you expected to join me, I have not heard of any of them, only the Weymouth was driven into Rye Bay, and the Swallow was obliged to ride it out in Dover Road, so I am, dear Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

J. Baker.

Monmouth, off of Tynemouth Bar
the 21st March 1707/8.

Dear Sir,—I beg you would let me hear from you as soon as possible you can for if the wind should happen to come out I must be obliged to send all the transports in and myself to go to sea. Pray speak my service to dear Sir John Jennings, my Lord Dursley, and the rest of my friends. At my coming into Ostend they informed me that the nine sail of the enemy's ships which lay in Flemish Road sail out Wednesday, 10th instant.

Endorsed: Received the 22nd at 8 at night.

21 March. Baker to Burchett from off Tynemouth:—
He has just arrived with all the troops except one hoy with 150 men which lost company on the 19th and has probably foundered. As the

wind is E. and S.S.E. and blowing a gale he cannot go over the bar.

He has received the letter of 13th and 18th March [five altogether] and is waiting for news either from Byng or Leven, from neither of whom he has heard anything (viii. 253–4).

22 March. Baker to Burchett from off Tynemouth :—He has received H.R.H.'s orders of 19 March and is waiting for the five ships mentioned in them. Thinks the transports carrying the troops are too leaky and damaged to stand the voyage back to Ostend. Will try to get local shipping in their place but thinks it will prove difficult (viii. 254).

22 March / 2 April. Cadogan to Sunderland :—Has received Sunderland's letter of 18th March [O.S.] and has stopped Sabine's regiment and the artillery at Ghent. Has arranged everything at Ostend for the return of the troops from sea. Has received news of enemy's failure 'with inexpressible satisfaction' (viii. 46).

FROM LORD LEVEN

Edinburgh. 23rd March 1708.

Sir,—Your packet which I received at three o'clock this morning for Admiral Baker, I ordered to be despatched with all diligence. I have just now received under my cover the enclosed packet from Mr. Burchett for you. In his letter to me he acquaints me that you are ordered by his Royal Highness to make the best of your way out of the Firth to endeavour to secure and protect the coast of Scotland, in case the enemy should attempt to land. I must beg the favour of you that when you are at sea you will if possible let me hear from you, if you can send your letters either to the

towns of Aberdeen or Montrose, directed for me to the care of the Magistrates of either of those towns. They will take care to forward them to me. Since my last to you of the 21st I have several letters from the North, from Aberdeen of the 18th, and from Inverness of the 17th. There were no appearances of any fleets then, from any of those places. I shall give orders to the Magistrates of Aberdeen to send you any news they get from the North, if you appear upon their coast. I shall be very impatient to hear frequently from you, and therefore I must again entreat you to have what intelligence you get of the enemy transmitted to me frequently in what way and manner you shall judge most safe and proper, that so I may be able to give such information and directions to Brigadier Sabine, who commands the troops from Ostend, as may be most for Her Majesty's service. I have just now received a letter from him and another from Admiral Baker of the same date of yours from him, but by the neglect of the Postmaster of Alnwick [?] were forgot at his house for several hours which made them so late a-coming to my hand. Sir, I have been told that a seaman on board of your fleet did inform a friend of his when he was ashore that there was one John Murray,[1] brother to Murray of Abercairnie, on board the Salisbury, that he was in disguise and passed for one of the cooks; whether there be any truth in this I cannot tell, but thought it fit to let you know what I have heard, for this John Murray has been a person mightily trusted and frequently employed by the Pretender with messages betwixt France and this.

[1] Robert Murray, another brother of Murray of Abercairnie, was one of the disaffected Scots who were arrested on suspicion of acting against the Government.

I presume that Captain Gordon and Captain Hamilton or some of their crews may know him by sight if they are informed that he is disguised. I am sorry that I shall not now have the honour to see you before you leave this. It has blown so very hard for several days that I could not come on board to wait on you as I desired, so that I must take this opportunity to wish you a good voyage and good success in all your undertakings.

I am much honoured Sir,

Your most humble and obedient Servant,

LEVEN.

The seaman's name that informed about John Murray is Alexander Fullerton.

Endorsed: Received the same day about Noon.

FROM LORD LEVEN

Edinburgh. 23rd March 1708.

Much honoured Sir,—I hope you will excuse the frequent trouble that I give you since it proceeds from my zeal in promoting of Her Majesty's service; since my writing to you in the morning I have received the enclosed account; it was sent me by the Magistrates of Dundee who had the account from one of their Burgh, who had been in the town of Elgin, and came from thence upon Friday morning last. The Magistrates of Dundee sent the person here to me, who gave them this information, that I might examine him myself, which I have done, and he adds to what is here enclosed, that he came to the town of Elgin upon Thursday last, the 18th instant, and that he was informed that these three Frigates had been at

anchor from Wednesday morning, that they continued there all Thursday, and that they were still there upon Friday morning when he left Elgin, that he did not hear of any other ships upon the coast; he adds that they sunk a ferry boat at the mouth of Spey and told the Prince of Wales would pay for it. I know not well what to make of this account, you will be better able to judge, but I am apt to believe that those frigates have been put in for intelligence and probably have been wind bound. Now if they have been there for intelligence, then I presume that their fleet must be still off of that coast and that still they have a design to land, and if so, it is more than probable that the second squadron that came from Dunkirk which we were informed Admiral Baker had been in pursuit of, must long ere now have joined Monsieur Fourbin, and upon this supposition, pray you consider if you are strong enough to engage them both. I am in some uneasiness upon this account, and if I discover my ignorance of sea affairs, I hope you will easily pardon it to

Sir, Your most humble Servant,

LEVEN.

ENCLOSURE.

GEORGE YEAMAN TO LORD LEVEN

Right Honourable,—Just now had one of our people that came from Elgin on Friday last, who see [*sic*] three French frigates lying at anchor off Speymouth and had landed eighty men who bought fresh provisions and returned to their ships. Desired the people of Elgin to bring them stockings and they would pay for them. The

informer is the bearer who I have sent, that your Lordship may examine as you judge convenient.

This with my due respects,

Right Honourable,

Your Lordship's most humble servant,

sic subscribitur

GEO. YEAMAN.

Dundee the 22 March
1708 at 9 at night.

23 March. Byng to Burchett from Leith Road:—Has received H.R.H.'s orders of 19 March for sending the five ships to the Humber and then the Downs, and for getting to sea himself. In consequence of which the five ships will sail on the morning of 24 March for Tynemouth. Two scouts which have lain off Aberdeen from 17 to 21 March have seen nothing of the enemy. Is expecting the Dover and Ludlow Castle which he sent off Buchan Ness to look into Murray Firth. Has no news from Lord Leven and thinks enemy must have returned to Dunkirk. Enclose copy of his council of war's opinion (viii. 254–5).

COUNCIL OF WAR

At a Council of War held on board Her Majesty's ship Medway in Leith Road the 23rd March 1707/8.

PRESENT:

Sir George Byng, Admiral of the Blue.
Sir John Jennings, Vice Admiral of the Red.
Lord Dursley, Vice Admiral of the Blue.

Orders being given to the five ships with the prisoners His Royal Highness had ordered into the River Humber, and from thence to the

Downs, and taking into consideration the other part of His Royal Highness's orders for our continuance on the Coast of Scotland for the guarding and security of it till further orders, according to the advices we shall receive of the enemy from His Royal Highness, or in these parts; it is agreed and resolved, so soon as the provisions can be removed out of the ships that go for the Downs into the ships of this Squadron, that we do proceed with the remaining part of the said Squadron off of Buchan Ness, sending into the shore to gain what intelligence we can; and on the return of our scouts which we shall send in, if we gain no certain account of the enemy, that then we ply up again towards the Frith of Edinburgh, in order to obtain such intelligence as we may receive from this part of the country, or be ready to put in execution such orders as His Royal Highness shall please to direct for our further proceedings.

G. Byng.
J. Jennings.
Dursley.

23 March. Advices from Coleraine received by Hopkins and forwarded to Burchett:—On 20 March six ships appeared off Ballintoy Bay (about 11 miles east of Coleraine). On a signal from the largest boat with six men in went off, who were taken on board and asked if the Prince of Wales was heard to be in Scotland and if there were any English frigates on the coast. The men replied that there was a 'flying report' that the P. of W. was landed and that there were no English frigates about, except the one they were in at the moment 'supposing her to be English built.'

There were three gentlemen in the cabin, who 'appeared to be persons of note and were

attended with blacks with silver collars, music, etc., drinking the Prince of Wales's health which they would have him [the narrator] do in a glass of lemonade, or such like liquor.' The boatmen were eventually sent off and ordered ' to steer without bounding any other ship.'

This frigate was of 52 guns, the other ships were a 12 gun ship, 4 patereroes and 4 transports. The crews appeared to be a mixture of English, Irish, Scotch and French. The ships disappeared to the east (viii. 55–6, see also Admiralty In-letters from Secretaries of State, 1/4091 P.R.O., where ship is given as of 32 guns, a more likely number).

24 March. Burchett to Baker :—Enclosing H.R.H.'s orders, by which if Baker hears nothing of the enemy landing in Scotland he is to take the troops back to Ostend and land them and then to take command of the force cruising off Dunkirk to intercept the enemy's return. This force consists of :—

*Torbay	*Swiftsure
*Lennox	*Orford
*Ipswich	Swallow
Nottingham	Weymouth
Norwich	Maidstone
Tilbury	Nightingale
Sheerness	Griffin fireship
Dunwich	

Those marked with an asterisk are then to be sent to the Downs under Walker (viii. 232–3).

FROM LORD LEVEN

Edinburgh, the 24th March 1708
at 9 at night.

Much honoured Sir,—I have just now received a letter whereof you have the copy thereof here enclosed, although the information is neither very

clear nor particular, yet I thought it too considerable not to let you know of it immediately. If this information be true no doubt we shall have it confirmed betwixt and tomorrow and twelve [?] o'clock, and until I hear further, I am resolved to give no advice to Admiral Baker or Brigadier Sabine, for I suppose you know, that I am ordered only to call for them if the French be landed. What makes me inclined to give the more credit to this account, is, that the Jacobites here have been talking both yesterday and this day that the French fleet were gone about to the West coast. If you are gone out of the Firth tomorrow before I get any further account, I shall send an express to you how soon I get any account to Montrose or Aberdeen, to be sent off from either of those two places, if you order any frigate to come near the shore,

I am, Sir,
Your most humble
and obedient Servant,
LEVEN.

Endorsed: Received the 25th in the morning at 7 o'clock.

ENCLOSURE.

JOHN CRAWFORD TO THE PROVOST OF GLASGOW

Port Glasgow,
March 24th, 1708.

My Lord Provost,—At all peradventure, forward account of what is just now come to my hearing from the other side of the water, if perhaps the same account may not be with you before this comes to hand; what followed was delivered to me in the presence and hearing of Mr. Robert

Miller about eleven in the night. Sir John Campbell of Carrick yesternight on his way home from Greenock [?] betwixt Ardrishaigh and the kirke of the Rue met with a highland post going for Edinburgh with an account of the French ships being in the Road of Douart on the Island of Mull.

What further the post reported, was that they were all there on Saturday last. I may write no more than just what [is] here, and leave you to consider in what may be expected to follow. When they are so near the Garrison and Inverlochy. We have here just now much about the same account from Greenock, and believe the bearer, John Barkings may have heard of the same and what more hath offered.

I am,

Your Lordship's servant,

(Signed) JOHN CRAWFORD.

FROM LORD LEVEN

Much Honoured Sir,—Captain Brown of the Queenborough is just now come to me to know what further orders I have got from the west coast, in answer to which I can only tell you that I have heard nothing further of the French fleet being on the western coast. I hope what information I got last night shall not prove true, for I have a letter from Fort William commonly called Inverlochy, this morning dated the twenty first, being Sunday at four o'clock in the evening, and they mention nothing of the enemy's fleet. Now this fort being four and twenty miles or thereby only from the Road of Douart, where the enemy's fleet was said to be in that account I had, and that they were there on Saturday. I cannot think but

there must have been some account of them at Fort William, and therefore I conclude that the account I had last night is false. I shall despatch however an express tomorrow morning with what accounts I get from the west this evening, and shall order the messenger to get a boat at Montrose or Aberdeen and give my letters to any of your frigates that are upon the coast.

I am, much honoured,
Your most humble and
most obedient Servant,
LEVEN.

Pray give my most humble service to Lord Dursley and Sir John Jennings.

Edinburgh,
4 o'clock thursday the 25th March.

Endorsed: Received the 26th in the morning.

25 March. Burchett to Baker :—Enclosing an addition to H.R.H.'s orders of 24 March. If the ships which Byng has been ordered to send Baker reach him before he sails, he is to order the Monmouth and Cruiser to accompany them to the Downs touching at the Humber (viii. 233).

25 March. Baker to Burchett from the Monmouth :—He is very worried about the transports, five of which cannot possibly make the voyage back to Ostend and others much too small. Is taking up four large colliers ; does not understand the transport service and wants Commissioners of Transport to deal with the owners of the colliers and other matters arising out of the business. Has had news from Byng and Leven, but nothing about the enemy (viii. 255–6).

26 March. Captain Griffith to Burchett from the Swiftsure in the Downs :—About 10 A.M. on 25 March his squadron (then about 8 leagues N.N.E. from

Dunkirk) sighted 14 ships from N.N.W. to N.E. of them, the wind being W.S.W., one of which had a white flag at the maintopmast head. These ships got into line of battle and Griffith's squadron being outnumbered stayed to windward and lost the 14 ships in the night. Decided to return to Downs to report (viii. 256).

FROM LORD LEVEN

Edinburgh,
27th March 1708 at 6 of the morning.

Much honoured Sir,—I have just now received yours of the 26th in the evening by Captain Brown. I despatched yesterday morning a servant express to Montrose or Aberdeen with a letter for you, but there was no manner of news in it. I have had no further account from the west coast of the French fleet, so to be sure what we heard formerly must be false, by my last letters from Inverness of the 18th all was then quiet, and no appearance of the enemy upon that coast. I had letters from London of 22nd; there were no letters for you, nor no news. They were still impatient to hear from you and me, for they had then no account of the French fleet either from the coast or from Dunkirk. I heartily regret the misfortune you have by cross winds and foggy weather. If I receive news from any hand, I will endeavour to give you notice thereof, from Montrose or Aberdeen.

I am,
Much honoured Sir,
Your most humble and
most obedient Servant,
LEVEN.

Endorsed: Received the 28th.

27 March. Leven to Lord Mar:—Has just had letter from Byng who is held up by fogs and east winds off Isle of May. Hears from bearer of it that Byng thinks enemy have gone north. Is uneasy about this as there has been no news from Inverness since 18 March. Thinks news about enemy being on west coast of Scotland must be false. Thinks Pretender must be still at sea as there is no news of his return to Dunkirk. Messenger from Aberdeen just arrived says nothing had been seen of enemy from there when he left on morning of 26 March (viii. 154–5).

27 March. Burchett to Sunderland:—Has received Griffith's letter about enemy returning to Dunkirk (viii. 46).

27 March. Prince George of Denmark to Baker:—He is to take the troops back to Ostend at once and then take up a position off Dunkirk. From Captain Griffith's report it appears that the enemy have returned to Dunkirk so when Baker meets Walker he is to take him and his ships south and then order him to blockade Dunkirk while Baker is landing the troops at Ostend. After this Baker is to join Walker off Dunkirk and take command of the blockade (viii. 233–4).

FROM LORD LEVEN

Much honoured Sir,—I have no manner of news of the enemy squadron and have heard nothing of Admiral Baker's squadron by last post. He is no doubt still at Tynemouth, waiting for news from this place.

The Duke [of Marlborough], by a letter of the 23rd to me, says he is going for Holland to meet with Prince Eugene of Savoy and will return to

Britain again in ten days. I have nothing else to trouble [you ?] with at present.

I am much honoured,
Your most humble and
most obedient servant,

28 [March 1708]. LEVEN.

28 March. / 8 April. Cadogan to Sunderland from Brussels :—Twenty-four of Fourbin's fleet have returned to Dunkirk with the troops in very bad condition, but six of the largest ships are still out. It is uncertain whether the Pretender has returned or not (viii. 46–7).

29 March. Byng to Burchett from the Medway in Leith Road :—On 24 March sent off the five ships as desired with the prisoners (from the Salisbury) on board, and sailed himself with the remainder of his squadron. Has been held up at first by calms and fogs and then by heavy seas and E.N.E. winds and has had to return to Leith. Is in want of provisions.

Dover and Ludlow Castle have returned with no news, so thinks enemy have returned to Dunkirk, although they may have been driven towards Norway. He and his flag officers think it would be better to wait at Leith for definite news of the enemy but in deference to H.R.H.'s orders will sail as soon as weather permits. Is uneasy about Baker's safety (viii. 256–7).

29 March. Byng to Sunderland :—A shorter version of the same letter (viii. 71).

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Admiralty Office,
30th March, 1708.

Sir,—By this I own the receipt of your three letters of the 23rd of this month, which, and the papers enclosed therein, have been communicated to His Royal Highness ; and herewith I send

you the Prince his orders to have three of the ships under your command on the coast of Scotland, and to repair with the rest to the Downs.

Captain Walker is gone off of Dunkirk with a squadron of Her Majesty's ships, and when Rear Admiral Baker has seen the transports to Ostend, he is to repair thither also, and to cruise so as to prevent any ships coming in, or going out northward.

The enemy's ships are returned to the said port of Dunkirk, which were lately off of Scotland, and it is said that the forces they had on board are in a lamentable sickly condition, the hospitals and houses being scarce able to contain them.

In one part of your letter, you seem to be under some uneasiness, as if some person had reflected on your conduct. I am very sorry that you should have any disquiet on that score; and had the Prince himself thought that you had not done your duty His Royal Highness would have let you know as much. I may assure you that your getting up so timely to the Frith of Edinburgh, and thereby preventing the enemy in landing their troops (which was certainly their chief, or only design) is esteemed by all as a very great and signal service to your country; and had you had the good fortune to come up with them, it is not in the least doubted but that yourself, the Flag Officers, and other gentlemen in the fleet under your command, would have behaved yourselves like gallant men, and like hearty lovers of your Queen and country; and since it is impossible to prevent the rumours and reflections of the town, who you know are busy on all such occasions, I hope you will give yourself no further uneasiness on that score.

I am, Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

J. BURCHETT.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Whereas the ships of the enemy which were lately on the coast of Scotland, are returned to Dunkirk with the land forces they had on board, I do therefore hereby direct and require you, (in pursuance of Her Majesty's pleasure signified this night at a Committee of Council) to make the best of your way with Her Majesty's ships under your command to the Downs, where I have ordered stores and provisions to be in a readiness for you [*sic*]; but in regard Her Majesty thinks it for her service, that three of the ships with you should be left on the coast of Scotland, to prevent any disaffected persons making their escape from thence, or any correspondence between them and France, you are either to leave such one ship of the fourth rate, one of the fifth, and one of the sixth; or one of the fourth rate and two of the fifth, as you judge most proper, directing their commanders to cruise in such station or stations as you shall judge most convenient for answering the services aforementioned;[1] and you are to cause them to be supplied from the other ships under your command, with as much provisions as will complete what they have to three months for their highest complements of men at whole allowance, or such part thereof as can be conveniently spared.

Given under my hand this 30th March 1708.

GEORGE.

Endorsed: Received the 3rd of
April in the evening by express.

[1] Byng appointed the Bonaventure, Mermaid and Squirrel for this service.

COPY OF CORRESPONDENCE DEALING WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF BLOCKING THE CHANNELS OF DUNKIRK

FROM LORD GODOLPHIN.

29th February 1707/8.

I find some people here are of opinion that sinking of some old ships with stores and ballast in the harbour of Dunkirk might be easily done and would go near to make it impracticable for ships to go in or out there, at least for some time, and it would be a very great advantage to us if we could deprive them of the use of that port though but this summer. Pray let me know your thoughts of this when you have opportunity.

BYNG TO LORD GODOLPHIN

[No date.]

Your Lordship is pleased to ask for my opinion whether the sinking some old ships fitted with ballast and stone work at the mouth of the harbour of Dunkirk might not spoil the entrance into the harbour; certainly it would if we could come to lay them where they would have effect but there lies the difficulty, for the passage into the Piers is no way practicable from the nature of the fortification, and for the several channels into Flemish Roads, which are three or four, the westernmost, which is the best, is so much under the command of their fortifications too, that I think there is great difficulty in that; besides the channel is pretty broad and would take up many ships to stop the passage. The other channels, which are narrower, our Pilots are not very well acquainted with, besides we must suppose the enemy will not be idle with their galleys, small ships and other embarkations to prevent a work

of this kind, that we shall not be able I fear to support them with our men of war, from the difficulty in bringing them near enough for that service. But this, my Lord, is only my own opinion. I will as soon as the weather is better call together the Flags and will consult with the most knowing Pilots and have their opinion of what can be thought on, with a probability of success in it.

LORD GODOLPHIN TO BYNG

[5 March 1708.]

As to the choking up of the Harbour of Dunkirk, I am glad you have not absolutely rejected the thoughts of it, though I am very sensible the thing is liable to all the objections you mention, but at the same time I consider that if we cannot do something to restrain the liberty they have at present of going out every way and consequently with all winds, we must submit to be cruelly tormented with them all this summer, and be obliged to keep a much greater squadron to observe them, than they have within the place, whereas if we could but for this summer only spoil these channels into the Flemish Roads which are the narrowest, and consequently the easiest choked though the westernmost channel remained still open yet when they had but one passage open, we should then know how to place our ships that nothing could go in or out without our knowledge. Now in case you have none of your Pilots that have much knowledge of those sands, I believe Major General Cadogan would readily furnish you with some from Ostend, or the Dutch when joined might also help you from Zeeland, but should think the former of these shows the more probable. This service being of

so great importance, I hope you will the more easily forgive these unskilful suggestions.

[For the complete text of this letter as well as that of 29 Feb. see pages 58–9, 69–70.]

OPINION OF THE PILOTS IN RELATION TO THE STOPPING UP THE CHANNELS LEADING INTO DUNKIRK

We the underwritten pilots having taken into our consideration the proposal made to us of stopping up the channels that lead into Dunkirk and spoiling Flemish Road, after having maturely deliberated thereon, do unanimously agree in the following opinion, viz :—

That the stopping up the channels which lead into Dunkirk will be of little use and service, for the ships of that place will be able notwithstanding to come out over the sands at high water on a Spring tide ; but if any service can be done, it must be by sinking ships in the Road where they ride to take their guns in.

Given under our hands on board Her Majesty's ship Medway in Leith Road, this 31st March 1708.

Cornelius Smith
Samuel Enbetts [?]
Stephen Hammond
George Golder
Henry Pascall
Richard Cullen
John Powell.
William Bentley.
John Kirkby [?].
George Barber.
William Wade.
Isaac Hunter.
Adam Knowles [?]
Peter Gunett.

COUNCIL OF WAR

At a consultation of Flag Officers and Captains held on board Her Majesty's Ship Medway in Leith Road, this 31st March 1708.

PRESENT :—

Sir George Byng, Admiral of the Blue.
Sir John Jennings, Vice Admiral of the Red.
Lord Dursley, Vice Admiral of the Blue.

Captain Josiah Crowe.
,, Edward Owen.
,, James Mighells.
,, Francis Hosier.
,, Edward Hopson.
,, George Walton.
,, Salmon Morrice.
,, Philip Cavendish.
,, Richard Canning.
,, Richard Hughes.
,, Baynham Raymond.
,, Thomas Matthews.
,, Edward St. Loe.
,, Thomas Scott.
,, John Chilly.
,, Robert Coleman.
,, Nicholas Haddock.
,, John Shales.
,, Chaloner Ogle.

The proposal of Captain Elkin's for blocking up the harbour of Dunkirk being laid before the Council of War, and the opinion of all the Pilots in the Fleet being had thereon ; it is unanimously thought that the sinking of ships on the Bar between the Piers of Dunkirk is not practicable from the nature and strength of the enemy's

fortifications, but if it was feasible to sink them on the Bar, the Pilots are of opinion they would be soon washed into deep water.

It is our opinion, that ships filled with stone and terras may be sunk between the East breakhead and the Cames, which is the north channel of Dunkirk, and likewise between the Brambels and the Brothers, which is the east channel, and may be done in Summer season. But if it is effective, the Pilots are of opinion it will be of little use, for the ships of that place will be able notwithstanding to come out over the sands at high water on spring tides ; but if any service can be done, it must be by sinking ships in the Road, where they ride to take their guns and provisions in and out.

But as for the west channel between the west breakhead and the Splinter, it is not so practicable, the channel being wide, and the water deep from seven to ten fathoms at low water.

G. Byng.
J. Jennings.
Dursley.
Jos. Crowe.
Edward Owen.
James Mighells.
E. Hopson.
Phil. Cavendish.
Rich. Hughes.
Rd. Canning.
F. Hosier.
Thos. Matthews.
E. St. Loe.
Thos. Scott.
John Chilly.
N. Haddock.

[Apparently Captains Walton, Morrice, Raymond, Coleman, Shales and Ogle, did not sign this opinion.]

FROM LORD LEVEN

Edinburgh the 31 March 1708.

Sir,—You have here enclosed copies of letters which I have just now received from Admiral Baker and Brigadier Sabine. I think it very strange that neither you nor I have not [*sic*] had an express from Court with the same news of the French fleet; how soon any such letter comes to my hand you shall hear again from

Sir,

Your most humble and
most obedient servant,
LEVEN.

ENCLOSURE NO. 1.

REAR-ADMIRAL BAKER TO LORD LEVEN

March 29th, 1708.

My Lord,—On the 27 [?] instant I received an express from His Royal Highness of the 24th, in which he directs me to acquaint you with my orders that I have received, which is to proceed to Ostend with the troops I brought from there, if in case I had not received any intelligence from your Lordship of the French having landed their troops in Scotland.

But on the 27th instant the 5 ships that was [*sic*] detailed from Sir George Byng's squadron arrived here which brought me a copy of an account from Sir George Byng which your Lordship had sent him, which seemed to say the enemies being landed on the Isle of Mull. But I not receiving a confirmation of it from your Lordship makes me believe it a false report, so send this by express and am in hopes to have an answer from your

Lordship before my sailing. Just as I received His Royal Highness his orders, the wind coming up at E.N.E. and blowing hard so that I could not send my boat ashore ; and obliged me to put to sea, otherwise you'd had an account of the orders I received sooner. But the wind still continuing contrary so that the transports cannot go out of the harbour, I am in hopes to receive your Lordship's commands, before my departure from here.

Just as I am writing this I received another express from his Royal Highness, which directed me to stay for your Lordship's intelligence till tomorrow. But if the wind continued contrary I must be obliged to stay longer.

So I have the honour to be

Your Lordship's . . . .

ENCLOSURE No. 2.

BRIGADIER SABINE TO LORD LEVEN

29th March 1708 from Tynemouth.

My Lord,—I had the honour of your Lordship's of the 27th at 9 this morning, and one from Mr. Walpole, Secretary of War,[1] of the same date, from Whitehall, at three this afternoon, in which my Lord Duke of Marlborough has ordered me to return with the troops under my command to Ostend, being her Majesty's commands. I received with that express letters to Admiral Baker, who now lies off at sea, which I have sent him, but can have no return this night. I must believe by my letters it is his sailing orders with the troops.

[1] Secretary-*at*-War being the correct title.

This letter of Admiral Baker came on shore in the morning, before he received the last letter that came this day from London. I don't doubt but your Lordship is already advised her Majesty's order, that the French are returned and gone into Dunkirk, it being what Mr. Secretary of War says in his letter and that mine being just then arrived at Court [*sic*].

I shall be glad at all times of any commands from your Lordship, wishing you and Great Britain all quiet and happiness and believe that I am with zeal.

My Lord,
Yours, etc.
Jos. Sabine.

31 March. Baker to Burchett from the Crown, under sail, off Tynemouth Bar :—

The five ships detached by Byng reached Tynemouth Bar on the morning of 27 March ; Baker then removed soldiers from Monmouth and Cruiser so that they could conform to H.R.H.'s previous orders. At noon the same day he received H.R.H.'s later orders for taking the troops back to Ostend if he had no intelligence of enemy landing in Scotland. Could not send a report till 29 March as he was under sail in order to keep well clear of the bar, the wind being E.N.E. The squadron for the Humber have gone, including the Cruiser, which could not get out in time to start with the others.

Received letter of 25 March with H.R.H.'s orders on 29 March and the same evening H.R.H.'s further orders of 27 March (viii. 257–8).

31 March. Sunderland to Walpole :—The troops proceeding north to Scotland, by land, are to return to their quarters by easy marches (viii. 47).

31 March. Boyle to [?] Burchett :—In consequence of an address from the House of Commons, the Queen wishes Commons to be given a list of ships which went to Scotland with Byng and when they were last cleaned (Admiralty In-letters from Secretaries of State, 1/4091. P.R.O.).

$\frac{2}{13}$ April. Marlborough to Boyle from the Hague :—Has had a conference with States-General and Prince of Savoy, who wants 30,000 troops from Flanders for operations on the Rhine and Moselle. Thinks States-General will not agree to let the troops go. Marlborough thinks their attitude to be sound as we must be ready to take the offensive in Flanders to prevent another invasion. States-General think this can best be done by having a strong squadron off Dunkirk. Has got possession of a journal of Fourbin's expedition.

3 April. Byng to Burchett from the Medway, Leith Road :—Has been windbound by E.N.E. gales. Baker with 5 English and 4 Dutch warships arrived 2 April, having lost several anchors and cables and short of water and provisions. Byng's own ships are at half allowance of beer and in 3 or 4 days will have to go on short allowance of provisions. If ordered to the Downs could not provisions be sent there to meet him ? (viii. 258).

3 April. Mayor of Dover to Sunderland enclosing examination of three Englishmen escaped from Dunkirk :—They were captured off the rock of Lisbon in Feb. by a French privateer, the Victory, which took them to Dunkirk and then sailed to Scotland together with 5 others, 4 days after Fourbin's expedition had started. After a voyage of 4 days 5 of the ships reached Leith Road with Dutch colours and took in two pilots, but left again on seeing English force to north of them and then joined Fourbin's main body. Returned to Dunkirk and saw 16 out of Fourbin's

21 return, the troops 'in a very miserable condition.' Saw the Pretender land, 'being a tall, slight young man, pale smooth face, with a blue feather in his hat and a star on his cloak.' He was cheered when the expedition started but people 'were very mute at his coming back' (viii. 47–8).

4 April. Byng to Burchett, from the Medway, Leith Road :—Has received H.R.H.'s orders of 30 March. He and Baker are unmooring, the wind being east. Has detailed Squirrel, Mermaid and Bonaventure to prevent communications between France and Scotland (viii. 258).

6 April. Byng to Burchett from the Medway in Edinburgh Firth :—He and Baker have been windbound by fresh E. winds. They are now under sail with a small gale at S.E. (viii. 258).

FROM LORD LEVEN

Edinburgh the 8th April
1708.

Much Honoured Sir,—I take this occasion to extend you my hearty thanks for all your civilities when you were in this country and at the same time I must ask you a thousand pardons for the unaccountable rudeness and incivility of the Castle of Edinburgh in not returning the compliment you were pleased to honour me with. I won't offer you any of the foolish excuses which the officer upon the Guard and the Gunners made, when I caused examine [*sic*] them for their neglect, which was that it had been the fleet then coming up saluting of you, because they heard firing from several ships.

I knew nothing of the honour you had done us until I received a letter from you, by one of

your officers, who told me that you had saluted the Castle without having got any return. By that time you were almost the length of the Island of May, otherwise I had immediately ordered the Castle to have fired one round [?]. I must entreat that you do me the justice to believe that I was extremely vexed and sorry that this should have happened anywhere ; especially in a place so immediately under my command and I must entreat you that you'l impute it only to the ignorance and neglect of the officer upon guard and that you'l have the goodness to pardon it to

Much honoured
Your most humble and
most obedient servant,
LEVEN.

16 April. Byng to Burchett from the Medway in the Downs :—Sailed from Firth of Edinburgh 5 April with hard gales at S.E., but wind changing to S.E. arrived off the Foreland on night of 15 April, and anchored in Downs next morning with

Medway	Chatham
Bedford	Salisbury [see Index]
Berwick	Dover
Shrewsbury	Antelope
Canterbury	Falkland
Monck	Salisbury prize
Exeter	Ludlow Castle
Mary	Lyme
August	Queenborough
Worcester	Hunter fireship

Left Baker to the southward of the Staples ' plying for Tynemouth Bar ' (viii. 258–9).

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Whereas I am informed by your letter to my Secretary received this morning by express that you are returned into the Downs from the Coast of Scotland with Her Majesty's ships under your command, and that you have ordered the Dover to Portsmouth, and the Lyme to Sheerness to be refitted; and whereas I think it necessary for Her Majesty's service that the Shrewsbury and Queenborough should be forthwith ordered to the Nore that the men of the former may be removed into ships fitting out in the river, which are in want, and that the Chatham, Antelope, Falkland and Salisbury prize should be left in the Downs. You are therefore to give the necessary directions accordingly, and to the Captains of the said ships that are to remain in the Downs, that they do make all possible despatch in completing their provisions to three months for their highest complements of men at whole allowance; and since you have informed me that the Bedford requires a dock, you are to order her to Portsmouth, with directions to her Captain to make all possible despatch in her refitting, and then repairing with her out to Spithead. And as for the other ships which are mentioned in the margin [1] hereof, you are to give orders to their captains to proceed to Portsmouth and Plymouth, according as you shall judge they may be most speedily and effectually cleaned and refitted at those ports, giving me an account of what you do therein; and as you are to give orders to their captains to be very diligent in the getting their ships despatched, so

[1] Medway, Berwick, Canterbury, Monck, Exeter, Mary, August, Worcester, Salisbury [see Index], Ludlow Castle

are you to give strict directions to them and to the captains of the other ships beforementioned, that they do not presume to lie ashore without leave from me for their so doing, but they do take particular care to keep their officers and companies together, the want whereof hath on many occasions been very prejudicial to Her Majesty's service, and as to what you have desired that your brother's [1] company of Marines now on board the Shrewsbury may be put aboard the Royal Anne at Portsmouth, I do hereby direct and require you, to send them to her by one of the ships which you order to proceed westward, I having directed the captain of the said ship Royal Anne to receive them ; and whereas you have given me an account of a list enclosed in your letter, of what number of men are on board the ships under your command, supernumerary to their highest complements, you are therefore to send by the ships that go westward all such men as shall be so supernumerary to the highest complements of the said ships, with directions for their being put aboard the ships at Portsmouth whereto they belong ; but as to the supernumerary men which are on board the ships that are to remain in the Downs, and to come up to the Nore, you are to cause them to be put into the Salisbury prize, directing the said supernumeraries to be regularly discharged from the ships where they now are and entered on the books of the others.

Given under my hand this 17th April 1708.

GEORGE.

Endorsed: Received the 18th at 6 in the morning.

[1] Possibly John Byng, George's younger brother, who had taken George's place in Lord Oxford's Regiment and may have made another exchange. Otherwise Robert Byng, George's youngest brother, is referred to.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Admiralty Office,
19th April 1708.

Sir,—I have communicated to His Royal Highness and his Council your letter of yesterday's date, and herewith I send you the Prince his orders for your sending the Salisbury prize to Portsmouth, in order to her being cleaned and refitted for channel service, and the Navy Board are directed to cause her to be there appraised, and they are also directed to cause the Bedford to be victualled there for three months for service in the channel.

The Prince does well approve of the distribution you have made of the ships to the several ports, and as for the Berwick, His Royal Highness would have her remain at Spithead for some time.

The order from His Royal Highness does also direct you to send the Hunter fireship to Portsmouth to be cleaned and refitted, and I have written to the Earl of Sunderland desiring the Queen's commands about the two Prisoners of State which you brought from Scotland.

I was in hopes that I should have sent yourself, as well as Sir John Jennings and My Lord Dursley, leave to come to town this day, but there was a great deal of business at the Cabinet last night; however, it will be determined tomorrow.[1]

I am, Sir,
Your very humble Servant,
J. BURCHETT.

[1] They received leave by a letter from Burchett of 20th April, on the strength of Hopkins' letter giving H.M.'s leave (see Admiralty In-letters from Secretaries of State, 1/4091).

24 April. Baker to Byng from the Dreadnought in Dover Road :—

After leaving Byng on 16 April he arrived off the Maas on 19th. Joined Walker and his squadron and gave him H.R.H.'s orders to lie off N. channel of Dunkirk till Baker joined him.

Went on to Ostend and began arranging for disembarkation of troops (viii. 258–9).

$\frac{11}{14}$ May. Marlborough to Baker from Brussels :—Congratulate Baker on returning the troops to Ostend in such ' good condition.'

PART II

Jan.-April 1708

PERSONAL CORRESPONDENCE

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THE letters printed in this part consist of one written in January, 1708, which has nothing to do with the intended invasion of Scotland, and four others which, although they deal with matters arising out of the campaign, have nothing to do with the campaign itself.

The first letter, from the Rev. Marius d'Assigny, provides an amusing sequel to the capture of the Thétis, which took place in the spring of 1705. Byng, it will be remembered, had been engaged in protecting outward and homeward bound merchantmen in their passage past Ushant, off which the French privateers were particularly active (see 'Byng Papers,' vol. i). His squadron at that time consisted of the Medway, Rochester, Deptford and Exeter, in the last named of which he flew his flag and in which d'Assigny was chaplain.

At daybreak on 14th February, 1705, while returning towards the Channel, they sighted five ships to windward which turned out to be four French merchantmen under the protection of the Thétis of 44 guns. Byng at once chased, and ignoring the sternmost three of the group, which were merchantmen, made straight for the Thétis. The Exeter opened fire about noon at very close range, but, being to leeward and the sea rough, was unable to use her lower-deck guns. Although in every way an inferior ship to the Exeter, the Thétis put up a magnificent fight and was only taken at the end of six hours' fighting after losing thirty-three men, the Exeter's casualties being forty-five. Three out of the four merchantmen were also captured.

When the Thétis' officers were brought on board the Exeter, d'Assigny, who was most probably a Huguenot who had taken refuge in England, was ordered to act as

interpreter. He discovered from them that the Thétis, a Rochefort ship, had gone out to the West Indies in August, 1704, with a convoy of merchantmen and that when captured she was engaged in bringing home another convoy of nine from San Domingo, five of which had become separated from her in bad weather. In addition to her officers she also carried le Comte de Geres, late Governor of St. Christophers, and M. de Vasmeinier, King's Lieutenant in St. Martin's Island.

The Thétis also carried a valuable cargo, consisting of sugar, indigo, cacao, dried hides, and above £2,000 worth in coin and plate. D'Assigny makes all this clear in two letters he wrote describing the capture, one to the Duke of Ormonde (see Ormonde MSS., Hist. MSS. Com., viii. 144–6) and the other to Robert Harley (see Portland MSS., Hist. MSS. Com., viii. 172–3). Both letters were written on 9th March and state that after taking the Thétis ' we have met with contrary winds and tempestuous weather, which caused our Admiral and Captain to take out of her most of her valuable commodities to burn her. She twice lost her mainmast and broke her mizzen, and was so leaky that it was a difficult task to save her.' This statement is confirmed by the unidentified note attached to the letter from d'Assigny, printed in this volume. This note may have been written by the Purser of the Exeter or by Thomas Swanton her Captain. In it there is the definite implication that, owing to the confusion caused by rapid abandonment of the Thétis in bad weather, part of the cargo was either lost or irretrievably damaged.

On 25th February Byng wrote to Captain Swanton that in consequence of a declaration by the captain and officers of the Thétis that the sugar and indigo on board her was their own private property, Swanton was entitled to consider this as plunder and to divide it amongst his own officers and men without delivering them up to the Admiralty (see ' Byng Papers,' i. 66–7). Later on George Clarke writes to Byng that the Thétis being lost ' has made my service useless to you ' (see ' Byng Papers,' i. 67).

Then after the lapse of nearly three years comes d'Assigny's furious apocalyptical outburst, clearly the culminating effort of a long series of complaints. As far as we can see his chief complaint was that Captain Swanton had not made a proper division of the spoil, of which he insinuates more was saved than was generally imagined. The captain is also accused of taking the personal belongings of the Thétis on the ground that they were forfeited to the State. The second cause of complaint was that the Exeter's men had received no share in the prize money given to the rest of Byng's squadron for the capture of the three merchantmen. Evidently Byng had become annoyed with d'Assigny's importunity and had suggested that his agitation in the matter was doing more harm than good.

It would be interesting to know not only to what extent these charges were justified but also to what extent d'Assigny voiced the opinions of the Exeter's crew. In his letter to Harley he adds a postscript as follows : ' I have something to acquaint you with upon which the success of our fleet now going to sea will depend, but without express order I shall not venture to tell you.' It is hardly likely that this refers to the Thétis affair ; on the contrary at that time he seems to have been quite complacent about her fate. The trouble must have arisen after the disposal of such goods as were saved. Byng had evidently given the affair special attention, as otherwise why did he preserve a copy of his letter to Swanton and place it amongst the letters he received ? Incidentally, he seems to have been somewhat vague about the spelling of d'Assigny's name, as the letter in question is clearly endorsed as coming from M. d'Issigny.

The next letter, Byng's draft of a reply to the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Sir Samuel Maclellan, thanking him for the gift of the freedom of the City, is extremely interesting as evidence of the suspicion with which his conduct in the campaign against Fourbin was regarded. Doubtless the notables of Edinburgh were less critical than the busybodies of St. James's, and having had the

French close enough to be dangerous were only too thankful to Byng for chasing them away again.

His letter to the town of Plymouth, for which he had sat since 1705, appears somewhat cold in contrast to the one written to Edinburgh, and it may well be that in asking him to represent them once again they omitted to make generous reference to his recent bad luck.

The last two letters, dealing with his requests for his sons and for Lieutenant Cockayne, are also important as evidence of the methods of contemporary official patronage. Byng's requests appear reasonable enough, but Burchett replies in the most chilling manner, quite at variance with the almost fulsome tone with which he wrote on 30th March.

FROM THE REV. MARIUS D'ASSIGNY

London,
6th January 1707/8.

Addressed :—For the Honoured Sir
George Byng at his house, near
St. James's, London.

Honoured Sir,—I should be wanting to my own innocence and yield to your accusations if I should suffer your late reproaches without an answer, which I was not permitted to make or thought not seasonable at your house. You find fault with my affidavit ; some things I affirm of my knowledge, others I declare to have heard, or to believe, and you shall find me very cautious. But you accuse me of what I never thought—that the ship was worth 50,000 pounds. There is not one word of that there, but in another [letter?].

But I appeal to you, Sir, whether it be just that the Captain or any others should convert the goods of this ship to their own use and allow so little a proportion to the ship's company. I have under the French officers' hands to prove that there was on board 300 casks of sugar, whereof 30 were refined and white, 25 Eaux of Indigo in barrels, beside several bags, 25 Bouraux of Cacao, 250 dry hides. We know the ship was emptied of all these goods, for she burned ten or twelve hours before she sunk. The Queen's Declaration allows and prescribes to us our several shares in all prize goods. If the Captain had performed but his promise to us of giving to us another dividend this matter had never been questioned, though that had been perhaps not the quarter

part of our due proportion. Pray, Sir, if you were in our case it would trouble you to be defrauded of so great a share which we know justly to belong to us. Here is therefore a wrong that we suffer as well as the Queen by the embezzlement and private selling of these goods. And shall we not have liberty to complain? I have or will have nothing to say of the burning of the ship, nor of those monies and goods between decks and in the officers' cabins. You know who stripped and examined the seamen's pockets as they ran on board, and who took from the Surgeon's mate his load of French coin, telling him that it was the Queen's money. But the goods of the ship locked up in the hold, the merchandise and sugars appertain to the ship's company as well as to the Chief Commanders by Act of Parliament and the Queen's Declaration. And to be deprived of so considerable a booty cannot but grieve us. And we must needs take notice how unjustly the Exeter's men have been dealt with, more than any other of her Majesty's Navy in this particular, and in being cheated of their share of those ships that were taken in her company. They encountered with the man of war and hazarded their lives, while the others seized without any difficulty the rich merchantmen. In the distribution of the monies no regard hath been had to them, whereas the Medway only coming to the assistance of the Chatham and without having a gunshot against her, has lately had a proportion of the Augustus. Are we to fare the worse for your being on board? We expected more justice from such an even and excellent tempered gentleman as we know you to be. But I was startled to hear such expressions from your mouth—that parsons do more mischief than good. If they had come from a Sadducee,

an atheist, an infidel, or an enemy of our church it had been no wonder, but from a Christian gentleman—one in communion with us, a Member of Parliament entrusted with the honour and concerns of the function, to condemn it as pernicious for the supposed fault of a single member is inexcusable, and proceeds from that excess of impiety that reigns at sea where no manner of respect is shewn to God, religion or ministers, where cursing and blasphemy is modish and the Devil is more respected and bears a greater sway than the Almighty Creator of all things. 'Tis strange that so many judgments that have fallen upon such men make no impression upon their minds. In 73 or 74 eleven men of war with about 6000 seamen were swallowed up in the waves,[1] out of your squadron, the Plymouth[2] with all the damning crew perished in the same manner. And now lately your Chief Admiral and Father[3] with all his company have been destroyed in the same manner. And 'tis a question whether any of you will lay those public examples of Divine justice so to heart as to amend your lives and forbear your defiances and provocations of your God. The Chief Commanders are accountable for the abominable practices and customs of their inferiors because they are so far from restraining them that they countenance—and some encourage their impiety and licentiousness by their wicked examples. From such men what justice may be expected? What regard to the interest of their fellow creatures and fellow subjects, when they are so injurious to the good God upon whose power, goodness and providence they depend? For my part, I never had your name in question,

[1] Appears to refer to the storm of 26th November, 1703.
[2] Lost at sea 11th August, 1706. [3] Shovell.

but with a respect to your honour and credit. I intend to be no more concerned in this matter, but to take my loss quietly and patiently. But as I have by me an abstract [?] of all the ship's goods, written by the French men, I shall be ready to gratify you therewith if you think that the producing of it in Court may be prejudicial to the Captain [1] whom I desire may be so cleared. You must pardon the freedom of my pen, being thereunto obliged by my function. In all other cases I shall be with all due respect,

Honoured Sir,
Your most humble
and obedient Servant,
M. D'Assigny.

The following note is attached to the above letter, but in a different handwriting :—

I am witness that the French officers as soon as they came on board made me tell the Admiral and Captain that they had been in violent storms since their coming from the French Cape of Hispaniola, that the ship had suffered thereby much damage. That they had lost company with most of their ships. That they kept the pumps going night and day continually. That they advised to get out of her what goods they could, before she might sink, for she was very weak and made only for sailing. That we had then a great sea and boisterous winds, which made her loose her mizzen mast next night after we had taken her, for it was blown by the board. That by the answer they gave me, some of the goods, indigo, sugars, etc., were between decks and cabins and

[1] Presumably refers to the Captain of the Thétis, le Chevalier de Saujon.

whether the other goods were saved I know not, or what quantity were saved I know not, but much of the sugars in the ships were damnified.

I was an eyewitness and thus the [*word illegible*] did nothing without the flag's orders.

BYNG TO THE LORD PROVOST OF EDINBURGH

St. James's, April 27th, 1708.

[Copy]

My Lord,—The honour your Lordship and the City of Edinburgh have done me by the hands of Sir Patrick Johnston in admitting me into the freedom of your City,[1] and in the manner you have done it, is so great, that I want words to express my self suitable to the obligations it lays me under, and the due sense I have of so high a favour.

Your Lordship has set too great a value on what only my good fortune has made me instrumental in, that I shall always esteem myself for being thought worthy of so particular a mark of your favour. *So calumny itself must now be silent, since you have given so open a proof to the world that my endeavours have not been unacceptable to you.*

As I have now the privilege of ranking myself among the worthy citizens of Edinburgh, your Lordship will do me the justice to assure them I shall be proud of all occasions wherein I can give any testimony of my zealous service of that

[1] According to Charnock he received the freedom in a gold box on 21st April.

City or in a more particular manner I desire your Lordship to believe me with all sincerity

My Lord,

Your Lordships etc.

G. B.

BYNG TO TOWN OF PLYMOUTH

St. James's, April 27, 1708.

[Copy]

Sir,—I am to acknowledge the favour of your letter of the 20th inst. and with great satisfaction find by it the good disposition the Gentlemen of Plymouth are in thinking of me to serve them in the next Parliament. I desire you present my humble service to the Gentlemen of the Corporation and assure them that if they do me the honour to represent them in Parliament I shall [endeavour] of [?] all occasions wherein I can give them any testimony of my zeal to do them all the service I am capable and promoting the interests they shall please to entrust me with, and shall ever be most pleased

being, etc.

G. B.

BYNG TO JOSIAH BURCHETT

St. James's, April 27, 1708.

[Copy]

Sir,—Intending to carry my two eldest sons to sea, to breed them up in her Majesty's service, I desire the Prince will please to give them his

letter, for being volunteers in the Salisbury prize, and that I may have leave to carry them in the ships I go in myself.

Mr. Samuell Cockayne has been these nineteen years in the service at sea, near four years since he was a first Lieutenant, and is of a very good family. In the beginning of the winter I recommended him to the Prince's Council to be employed in some ship and they were pleased to promise me to make him Lieutenant of the Monmouth, when Admiral Baker removed out of her. That vacancy being supplied by another, he was ordered to attend and has done so till now, but has not yet been thought on.

I desire you will please to let me know whether the Prince's Council have thoughts of doing anything for him, that if not he may be directed not to give any trouble or attendance, having been all the winter in Town upon charges. I am told there is some Lieutenant's employ open now. Please to favour me with a line in answer to this from

Sir,
Your very humble servant,
G. B.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Sir,—I have received your letter of yesterday's date with the opinion of a Council of War, in relation to the blocking up the channels leading into Dunkirk, the which I will communicate to the Prince and his Council.

As to your other letter of the same date wherein you desire that your two eldest sons may be appointed Volunteers in the Salisbury prize.

I am to acquaint you that the Prince has already appointed the full number to that ship, but if there had been vacancies, I doubt the Prince could not regularly have given directions for their being on board the ship where you hoist your flag ; and as for Lt. Cockayne, he will be provided for as soon as it is possible.

I am
Sir, Your very humble servant,
J. BURCHETT.

Admiralty Office,
28 April 1708.

PART III

May-Sept. 1708

COMBINED OPERATIONS IN HOME WATERS

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Byng having reached the Downs from Scotland on 16th April was given leave to come ashore by the Prince's letter of 20th April. But on 7th May fresh instructions were sent him to take command of twenty-eight ships and two fireships in home ports, and to cruise in the Soundings with the object of preventing a junction between the enemy's forces at Brest and Dunkirk, and also in order to protect trade. This was followed next day by a reminder of an agreement with the French to prevent the capture of French or English fishing boats by warships of either nation. The agreement was of long standing, but, owing to the difficulty of applying it, was being constantly altered and renewed and was the subject of petitions from the mayors of south coast towns, particularly those of Sussex.[1]

On 2nd June Byng received the Prince's further orders of 29th May, which defined his duties more fully. From these and the enclosure it appeared that Captain Edward Owen, of the Medway, was already at sea with five ships and with orders of 7th May to cruise between the Lizard and Start Point to protect trade and drive off privateers. He was also to take advantage of the next easterly wind to call at Plymouth to help in escorting the outward-bound trade, under Captains Lyell and Edwards, and if menaced by a superior force he was to retire to Spithead.[2] By orders of 11th May Lord Dursley was to take to sea from Portsmouth such ships as were ready, join Owen, and take over the command. By further orders of 27th May Dursley was to give special

[1] From information communicated by Lieut.-Commander J. H. Owen.

[2] Admiralty Orders and Instructions 2/37.

care to the mast ships waiting at Kinsale for convoy. Byng therefore by his latest orders of 29th May was to go to Spithead, and to take to sea such ships as were ready and with them join Dursley and Owen, and take over the command in chief.

On reaching Spithead he hoisted his flag in the Royal Anne, his favourite ship, and was soon busy with fitting out his squadron and arranging for the movements of various convoys and transports. On 6th June he received an important letter from Burchett replying to some queries sent him by Byng about an expedition of which 'this office hath as yet no cognizance.' A combined operation was being prepared by the Cabinet, chiefly under Marlborough's direction, the object being to seize one of the French Channel ports as a diversion which would result in the French having to divert large bodies of troops from Flanders and so relieve pressure on the Allies. Under such circumstances it had been customary during the war for orders and instructions to be issued direct to commanders of naval forces by one of the Crown's Principal Secretaries of State. Even when the Admiralty was controlling a campaign, all orders and instructions issued by it which were of any importance had to receive the Crown's approval before being sent out, and this again simply meant that the instrument for communicating approval was the Secretary of State. Sunderland appears to have played an important part in this business, and under Marlborough's guidance was continually making additions and alterations to the Admiralty drafts. This must naturally have caused a certain amount of departmental irritation at the Admiralty.

Moreover, since it was the authority of the Queen's husband which was being overruled, his advisers may have felt that they had particularly strong grounds for finding such interference tiresome. Hence Burchett's rather frigid denial of all official knowledge of the expedition, about which the Secretarial branch of the Admiralty had not yet been consulted, though doubtless the brothers Churchill had arranged the whole business over a decanter of wine.

Burchett, however, applies to Sunderland for orders on behalf of Byng, and on 5th June sends them to Byng in the Queen's name through Sunderland. Burchett then asks Sunderland whether Byng is to take his orders in future from him or from the Queen direct (letter of 7th June), and on 12th June is informed that till further notice Byng is to take his orders from Sunderland.[1] On 14th June the Prince notifies this change of procedure to Byng in the form of an order, with a covering letter from Burchett, which, however, speaks of Byng following the Queen's orders. But in this case Burchett is simply using the shortened form, implying that Byng is to follow the Queen's orders even if drafted and signed by Sunderland alone, instead of being drafted by Sunderland and signed by the Queen.

Meanwhile Dursley was complaining to Byng on 6th June that it would be better to have all his ships cleaned at once, as it was rumoured that Du Guay Trouin and Fourbin would not be ready till July, by which time all Dursley's ships would be foul, 'for we are almost so already.' Three weeks later he was complaining of the bad sailing qualities of his ships in comparison with those of three French privateers which he had unsuccessfully chased (letter of 29th June).

Byng was clear of Spithead by the second week in June, and having put into Plymouth for about a week sailed for his cruising station in the Soundings. On 27th June he received orders from the Prince that on his return to Portsmouth he was to make arrangements for embarking in his own ships such troops as, being intended for a 'sudden expedition,' could not be carried in the transports already provided. This is the first time that any business directly connected with the expedition was mentioned to him in Admiralty instructions from the Prince and also the first time that the name of Lieut.-General Erle was mentioned. Evidently the Admiralty was to be allowed to arrange the routine business of the embarkation, while Sunderland and Marlborough kept the strategic control of the expedition in their own hands.

[1] See Admiralty In-letters from Secretaries of State, 1/4091.

By the end of the month Byng had returned to Plymouth, where he received the Prince's orders of 29th June for preventing an attack on the Channel Islands and dealing with various convoy work, especially the bringing of two regiments from Cork, which with the expedition about to start had become a pressing matter. While at Plymouth he had to deal with several administrative matters, including courts-martial for desertion. There are a number of such cases scattered through Byng's papers at this period, and I have selected the cases of Russell and Lightfoot as typical of two different forms of the crime of desertion. Lightfoot, although condemned to death, was afterwards pardoned by the Queen (see letter of 3rd July), while Russell's one hundred lashes must have been almost equal to a death sentence. Apparently the Queen was fond of pardoning condemned criminals,[1] and this characteristic by no means pleased her Admirals.

On 4th July Byng received orders absolving him from protecting the Channel Islands from attack in consequence of the supposed enemy squadron at St. Malo turning out to be almost entirely merchantmen. Instead of this he was to concentrate on his convoy work. Two days later, however, he received orders from the Prince to return at once to St. Helens and prepare the transports there for embarking troops. With these orders came a letter from Sunderland dealing with the campaign in Flanders. The Catholic Netherlanders, alienated by the rule of 'Charles III,' which was little less than a Protestant Dutch dictatorship, had revolted from the Allies and surrendered Ghent and Bruges to the French. Sunderland's good news which was 'to balance it' was that Eugene, having eluded Berwick, had joined Marlborough, and that together they were pursuing a French rearguard between Brussels and the Dender. The French main body had, however, escaped, and although Marlborough and Eugene had good prospects of cutting the enemy communications with France, the fall of Ghent and Bruges menaced their own communication with Ostend and England.

[1] Trevelyan's *England under Queen Anne; Blenheim*, pp. 169–70.

On reaching Spithead Byng was summoned to Windsor to receive the Queen's personal instructions for the ensuing expedition. There is no indication in the instructions as to whether the expedition was to establish itself permanently on shore, or whether it was expected to return home in the autumn. Doubtless this question was still under consideration by the Cabinet, who wanted to see what preliminary success was achieved before committing themselves further.

Another matter was also exercising the attention of the Cabinet in connection with the expedition, and this was the projected expedition to Newfoundland, referred to in Burchett's and Godolphin's letters of 9th July. Apparently the original scheme was for this expedition to wait till after the attack on the French coast had begun, but that in consequence of delays in concentrating the necessary forces, due to bad weather, the expedition would have to start at once. Byng was therefor to consult with Erle in this matter with a view to obtaining the best co-operation in command between the two services.

From 9th to 19th July a number of orders were sent to Byng relating to the victualling and manning of the ships for the French expedition and the preparation of the transports. During his absence at Windsor, where he was followed by Dursley, Jennings was in command at Portsmouth, although anxious to go on leave and take a cure at ' the Bathe.' The Queen of Portugal's projected voyage to Lisbon, first mentioned in a postscript to Godolphin's letter of 9th July, was now giving the Admirals additional trouble, and the Royal Anne was ordered into Portsmouth Harbour to be ' fitted in all respects for that service ' (Orders from H.R.H. 13th July).

But on 22nd July Byng received fresh orders drawn up in Sunderland's own handwriting and signed and initialled by the Queen. By these Byng learnt that the purpose of the expedition had been altered and that now it was to be sent to St. Valery, at the mouth of the Somme in Picardy. The reason for this abrupt reversal of the original plan

was that in consequence of his unexpected success at Oudenarde on $\frac{30 \text{ June}}{11 \text{ July}}$ Marlborough was definitely contemplating an immediate advance into French territory, despite the fact that the French held Ghent and Bruges in his rear and that in order to reach the French frontier he would have to march right past Lille and Tournai, both strongly held. Hence Byng's and Erle's expedition was to be diverted from Normandy and Brittany to Picardy, where they might establish a base in direct contact with Marlborough's army and so precipitate his advance and embarrass the French. 'I heartily thank you for your kind congratulations on our late success,' Marlborough wrote to Erle on $\frac{12}{23}$ July, 'which I hope may have some influence on your designs, provided you find everything ready to proceed immediately.'

On 25th July, three days after receiving the Queen's latest instructions, Byng called together a number of pilots and asked their opinions on the possibility of landing troops anywhere between Cape Fréhel and Boulogne inclusive. The fact that they were asked to adjudicate on so wide a length of coast was probably due to Byng thinking that any moment his instructions might be altered again and that he might as well collect knowledge for as much of the French north coast as possible. It will be seen from the opinions that the pilots, true to their reputation for being 'canny,' were extremely doubtful as to whether it was possible to land troops anywhere at all. They admitted that troops might be landed between Caen and Bourg d'Authie and between Boulogne and Etaples, given easterly winds, but even then they would not undertake the business themselves. Byng then called a council of war, consisting of Dursley and Erle and Lieut.-General Seymour and Major-General Gorges, at which it was decided to attempt a landing on the east bank of the Somme, which presumably was to be followed up by an advance on Abbeville, if successful. The troops being already embarked, the fleet and transports sailed the same day, and on 28th July anchored off Deal, where they were to meet the storeships and extra transports, referred to in H.R.H.'s orders of 26th July.

The troops consisted of nine battalions :

The 12th (now the Suffolk Regiment),
The 29th (now 1st Batt. Worcestershire Regiment),
Hamilton's,
Dormer's,
Johnson's,
Moore's,
Caulfield's,
Townshend's,
Wynne's.[1]

They numbered in all about 7,000 men. Meanwhile two regiments of Dragoons, the 3rd and 4th (now Hussars), numbering about 700, were to be picked up at Dover. When Byng reached the Downs, however, they had not yet arrived, and actually they were only embarked in time to go with the expedition on its second cruise, which took place in August.

It looked as if the expedition might easily become a leisurely business, and Sunderland wrote to Byng on 28th July to urge the necessity of sailing for the Somme at once, ' that you may have landed your troops by the time appointed for My Ld. Marlborough's detachment to meet them.' On 29th July Byng again called on the pilots for their opinions, which with the closer proximity of the operation were even more unfavourable than before. Nevertheless Byng's council of war decided to shift those troops which had so far been carried in the warships into the extra transports met with in the Downs and to steer for Boulogne Bay, there to await further orders from home or the appearance of Marlborough's troops.

When leaving the Downs for Boulogne on 30th July Byng received Sunderland's letter of the 28th, which assumed that the expedition was still aiming at the Somme and which urged him ' if possible not to fail the time appointed.' But by the same vessel came an urgent letter from Marlborough requesting Byng and Erle ' to desist from the project of St. Valery,' and instead ' pursue our former instructions for disturbing and annoying the enemy's coasts.'

[1] Fortescue's *History of the British Army*, i. 503.

Why had Marlborough so suddenly altered his plans and vetoed their combined action with his own forces? In a letter written from Wervick on $\frac{23 \text{ July}}{3 \text{ Aug.}}$ to Henry Boyle the Secretary of State, he pleaded the difficulties involved in the siege of Lille as a reason for not attempting to invade France. 'Both the Prince [Eugene] and myself are of opinion that it will be impossible for us to take just measures for seconding Lieutenant-General Erle's design upon Abbeville, till we are masters of Lille, and that therefore the fleet with the troops should go direct to the coast of Normandy, and land and make what impression they can there till this siege be over and then shall give you timely notice when it may be proper to come this way, for we are of opinion no attempt should be made on Abbeville, nor the least jealousy given that way till towards the end of September, that our people may have the winter season to favour them to keep their ground, for it is certain the French will use their utmost endeavours, if the weather will permit, to force them on board again. In the meantime you will do well to advise with such French people as may be perfectly acquainted with the place and the country thereabouts what number of troops may be sufficient to maintain the post all the winter. You must consider withal that they must be supplied with provisions from England, for no doubt the enemy will block them up so close that they can have little or no assistance from the country. Now after all this project must depend on our success at Lille; and then if it shall be thought practicable, and can be executed, we must certainly reap a very great advantage by it, by joining them with a good body of troops in the spring and carrying the war in to the heart of France. . . . I hope [the messenger] will arrive in time before the fleet sails that they may receive the necessary instructions.'

Three days later, $\frac{26 \text{ July}}{6 \text{ Aug.}}$ he wrote to Erle that 'we are no way in a condition here at present to second those designs' [contained in the Queen's instructions of 20th July which Marlborough had received notice of on $\frac{23 \text{ July}}{3 \text{ Aug.}}$ and to which his letter of the same day to Boyle had been in answer]. 'I send this off from the

coast of Flanders,' he continued, 'to advise you and Sir George Byng of it, that you may not pursue your last instructions, but follow those that were given you at first for the coast of Normandy or Brittany; and I hope, if need be, towards the end of the next month, we may be in a posture for seconding you nearer at hand.'

Thus did Marlborough summarily dispose of the Picardy project, at least for the time being, and, anxious that Byng and Erle should get his news as quickly as possible, he sent it in duplicate, one letter going by a vessel arranged for by the commissary of packet boats and the other by one of Baker's frigates lying off Dunkirk and Ostend. His reason, however, for abandoning the invasion of France seems rather curious. Only a few weeks beforehand he had gaily announced his intention of masking Lille and leaving it uncaptured in his rear, while he crossed the frontier and drove his way into the heart of French territory, whereas now nothing could be done till Lille was captured. The explanation of this sudden fit of caution was that his ally, Prince Eugene, was unwilling to risk the Imperial troops in an enterprise which seemed chiefly to be planned for the advancement of the British. He would co-operate heart and soul with Marlborough to save his master's capital, Vienna, but as at Toulon in 1707 he was taking no risks on behalf of Queen Anne.

Meanwhile Byng and Erle, having received Marlborough's letter, held a council of war off Boulogne on 2nd August, at which Brigadiers Wynne and Hamilton and Colonel Townshend were present, in addition to the three senior land officers. It was decided that as the Queen's original instructions of 8th July gave some latitude as to where any attack was to be made, they would therefore land next day on the shore immediately before them. On 3rd August they stood in close, but no troops were landed, although they made a feint as if to do so and then steered south for Etaples, off which they arrived next day. Here another council of war was held, Brigadiers Wynne and Livesay being present and at which it was decided

to land a detachment, which enterprise was carried out successfully and the detachment re-embarked.

On 5th August letters were received from Boyle and Godolphin countermanding in the Queen's name the landing in Picardy, but ordering the fleet to remain in Boulogne Bay until they could pick up the Dragoons waiting for them at Dover, after which they were to carry out their original instructions on the coasts of Normandy and Brittany. Thus the commanders had successfully anticipated the Cabinet's wishes in not withdrawing from the Picardy coast the moment they learnt that Marlborough would be unable to co-operate with them. In consequence of their latest orders therefore, Byng carried out a thorough reconnaissance of the coast from St. Valery-sur-Somme to Tréport for future use, and then withdrew the fleet and transports from the coast of France and on 7th August steered for Dover, where the Dragoon Regiments were being embarked. Here they held another council of war next day, which decided on a landing either at Grandance [Granville?] or in the Bay of La Hogue, according to the wind.

The fleet reached the Bay of La Hogue on 11th August, bringing with them most of the Dragoons from Dover, and the same evening two land officers were sent close inshore to reconnoitre. They reported that there was a good landing place and that they could not see any enemy troops on shore. Next morning, however, when the fleet stood in close upwards of three thousand foot and horse were observed 'drawn up,' besides numerous forts. The five senior land officers therefore held a council of war by themselves at which they agreed not to attempt a landing on the grounds that the ships' boats could only put 1,200 men ashore at a time and would take two hours to perform the double journey.

Marlborough was highly displeased with their decision. 'I am very sorry this expedition has had so little success,' he wrote to Boyle from Fretain on $\frac{31 \text{ Aug.}}{10 \text{ Sept.}}$ on being asked his opinion as to where Erle's force should go next, 'and that our troops have been prevented attempting anything merely by the appearance of the enemy's militia, for it is

certain they have not one regular troop or company on all the coast, having brought everything they could to strengthen their army and even for that purpose put militia into their frontier garrisons.' The Cabinet had suggested that Erle's troops might be sent to Portugal, but Marlborough was of opinion that they might be more usefully employed if landed at Ostend. He had evidently given up all hope of their being able to create a useful diversion and wished to have them near at hand to strengthen his own force in Flanders. Mr. C. T. Atkinson, speaking of the incident in his 'Marlborough and the Rise of the British Army,'[1] says that 'Marlborough was far from ill-pleased at this,' but as he only quotes the letter dealing with the troops being sent to Dover his criticism is inconclusive.

Meanwhile Byng and Erle decided to make another attempt further west, and withdrawing from the Bay of La Hogue on 14th August rounded Cape Barfleur and steered for Cape La Hague. Here, however, they encountered strong westerly winds and therefore altered course and next day lay off Cherbourg, where Byng received Godolphin's instructions for detaching Dursley to cruise in the Soundings to protect the homeward-bound trade from Du Guay Trouin. They remained off Cherbourg till 17th August, when Dursley having been detached for his cruise, the remainder of the fleet and transports returned to the Bay of La Hogue. Here took place the court-martial arising out of irritability in the Royal Oak, which produced in the form of Fairlie's and Childress' statements two little gems of nautical prose.

On 26th August Byng received the Queen's permission to return to the English coast if necessary, and on reviewing the general situation of the expedition he and Erle came to the conclusion that their shortage of provisions and their growing sick list did not justify them staying out any longer, and leaving the Bay of La Hogue a second time they reached Spithead on 28th August.

Everything now depended on whether Marlborough wanted the troops landed at Ostend at once or not, and

[1] P. 357.

meanwhile Byng was occupied in refitting his fleet, considering the possibility of destroying Du Casse's fleet in the Harbour of Pasajes and in making arrangements for the Queen of Portugal's voyage to Lisbon. At length on 6th September Byng received Sunderland's instructions for taking the troops to Ostend. On reaching the Downs he consulted his pilots on 9th September, who were of opinion 'that no ship exceeding the fourth rate fifty gun'd ships are proper to go into Ostend Road at this season of the year.' But as he received on the same day permission from Sunderland to use some of Baker's squadron in the Downs to convoy the troops to Ostend he was not in any difficulty. But at ten o'clock the same night came orders for Captain Mighells to take a squadron from Baker's force and go up the East Coast to protect trade in consequence of seven enemy ships having escaped into the North Sea from Dunkirk. Afterwards he was to cruise near the Dogger Bank in order to intercept them on their return. Early next morning, 10th September, a hectic letter reached Byng from John Fawler, the Deputy Secretary of the Admiralty, full of alarm on account of the French ships from Dunkirk, and pointing out that, as Mighells has been ordered north, none of the ships with him will be available for taking the troops to Ostend. With this letter came a copy of Captain Desborough's intelligence about the escaped Frenchmen.

At 10 o'clock the same night came fresh orders for Mighells, mentioning some East India ships which were on their way from St. Helens to the Downs and required convoy into the Thames. Next day, 11th September, Byng received permission from Prince George to use any ships he found in the Downs for convoying the troops to Ostend, provided he did not take any of those assigned to Mighells. Those chosen for the business were afterwards to go on to the Texel and convoy back from there into the Thames some British East Indiamen, which had reached there homeward bound by sailing round the north of Scotland with a Dutch convoy. Byng himself was to take his big ships back to Spithead, bringing with him from the Downs the Turkey Trade and other merchant-

men, which if not ready were to wait in the Downs until they could be escorted by the ships gone to the Texel for the East Indiamen.

At two in the morning on 12th September another hectic letter arrived from John Fawler stating 'that the City is very much alarmed to hear that the ships under the command of Captain Mighells which were designed to protect the Northern Trades and free the coast of the enemy's ships which lately came out of Dunkirk were detached to Ostend to convoy the troops thither, but since they are already sailed and so soon expected back, it's hoped that will in some measure satisfy the Merchants.'

The Turkey Company also were 'no less alarmed' to hear that these same ships were going on to the Texel to bring home the East Indiamen. Byng was therefore asked to make these ships come back at once when they had landed the troops, and told that arrangements would be made later for bringing home the East Indiamen. Evidently the Turkey Company had scored a certain commercial success. The same afternoon Byng received a comparatively calm letter from Burchett hoping that the ships gone to Ostend with the troops would be back in good time to join Mighells and enclosing the Prince's orders, which merely repeated the terms of Fawler's letter and emphasized the 'ill consequence' which threatened the Turkey Company if their ships did not receive convoy to Spithead before the East Indiamen were allowed to come home from the Texel. The same day Byng received a doleful letter from General Erle recounting the unlooked-for arrival of his troops at Ostend.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Instructions for Sir George Byng, Knt., Admiral of the Blue Squadron of Her Majesty's Fleet.

Whereas from the advices which I have received from the Earl of Sunderland, Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State, of the enemy's preparations, there is reason to believe that Monsieur de Gue [1] (if not already at sea) is coming out of Brest with a squadron of ships, and that Monsieur Fourbin is coming from Dunkirk with another squadron, who probably may endeavour to join De Gue, which makes it necessary to send out the fleet immediately in order to oppose their designs, and destroy them if possible, as well as to secure the trade passing into and out of the channel; you are therefore hereby required and directed to take under your command Her Majesty's several ships named in the list hereunto annexed, and cause such of them as are not ready for the sea (which most of those are that you lately sent to Portsmouth and Plymouth to clean) to be put into a condition for it with the utmost despatch that possibly may be; and you are immediately to repair on board such one of them as you shall think most proper to hoist your flag in, and with the fleet under your command, or so many of them as can be soon got together, you are with the first opportunity of wind and weather to proceed to sea with them, and cruise in such station in the Channel or Soundings as you shall think most proper, and there to continue or remove from time

[1] Du Guay Trouin.

to time to such other places or stations as you shall judge most advantageous for annoying the enemy and protecting the trade of Her Majesty's subjects and her allies: and you are upon all occasions which shall offer, and according to the intelligence which you shall receive (without expecting particular orders, by which, opportunities of service may be lost) to endeavour to take, sink, burn or destroy any of Her Majesty's enemies, and to secure to the best of your power the trade passing out of, and into the channel.

You are to give orders to such of the ships under your command as shall not be ready to go to sea with you, to follow and join you at such place as you shall appoint as fast as they shall be in a condition for it.

And whereas four of the United East India Company ships are lately put into Galway, another into Battersby [Betraghboy ?], and a sixth into Killibegs [?] in Ireland, and the Company having desired that two ships of war may be forthwith appointed to fetch them to Kinsale, and a sufficient strength to convoy them from thence to England; you are therefore hereby required and directed, when a fitting opportunity presents for it, to detach some of the ships under your command to fetch the said East India Company ships to Kinsale, and to take care that they be convoyed from thence to Plymouth, or Spithead, as soon as conveniently may be.

You are from time to time to send such of the ships of the fleet under your command into port to clean, refit, and re-victual, as you shall judge most proper, I having given orders to the Navy Board, Principal Officers of the Ordnance, and Commissioners of the Victualling to cause the same to be done with the utmost despatch, according to such orders as you shall give therein.

You are to send to my Secretary for my information, frequent accounts of your proceedings in the execution of these and all such other orders as you shall receive, and also of the stations and motions from time to time of the fleet under your command, together with copies of the result of all Councils of War as shall be held by you, and also an account of such intelligence as you shall receive concerning the enemy's fleet and of all other occurrences.

Given under my hand this 7th May 1708.

GEORGE.

A List of the Ships appointed for the Fleet under the command of Sir George Byng, Admiral of the Blue.

Rate			
1st	Royal Anne	Jam. Monypenny	at Spithead
2	Triumph	Bart^w. Candler	at Spithead
	St. George	Rob. Johnson	at Spithead
3	Lennox	Rd. Culliford	at Portsmouth.
	Ipswich	Cha. Fotherby	at Portsmouth.
	Royal Oak	Wm. Passenger	at Portsmouth.
	Orford	Cha. Cornwall	at Portsmouth.
	Bedford	Tho. Stepney	at Portsmouth.
	Swiftsure	Rd. Griffith, Downs.	
	Assurance	An. Tollet, Plymouth ordered to Spithead.	
	Resolution	Rd. Haddock	Longreach ordered to the Nore.
	Humber	Thos. Smith	Longreach ordered to the Nore.
	Boyne	Vin^t. Cutter, Woolwich ordered to Longreach, thence to the Nore.	
	Suffolk	Wm. Cleaveland, Chatham ordered to Blackstakes, and from thence to the Nore.	

Rate			
4	Pembroke .	Edw. Rumsey, coming from Torbay to the Downs.	
	Medway .	Edw. Owen	at Plymouth.
	Canterbury.	Geo. Walton	
	Exeter . .	Bay.[1] Raymond	
	Salisbury .	Fra. Hosier	
	Worcester .	Rd. Canning	
	Plymouth .	Ion[s.][2] Hanway	
	Monck . .	Sal.[3] Morrice	at Portsmouth.
	August . .	Tho. Scott	
	Mary . .	Edw. Hopson	
	Dover . .	Tho. Matthews	
	Antelope .	Phil. Cavendish	
5	Ludlow Castle	Nic. Haddock	at Plymouth.
6	Aldborough	Beaut Walrond	
Fire-ship	Hawke .	Tho. Richards	
	Hunter .	Fra. Drake at Portsmouth.	

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Whereas in order to prevent the molesting the fishing boats of both nations, the following agreement hath been made with the Court of France, viz. :

'That all fisher boats of both sides that shall catch herrings, mackerel, oysters, lobsters, and all sorts of flat and fresh fish, shall not be molested from the Orkneys [?] to the Land's End in England, the Islands of Guernsey and Jersey included, and from the Height of Ostend to Bayonne, but that if any fisher boats be found with salt or barrels, or any salted fish of both sides and taken, they shall be made lawful prizes.'

[1] Baynham. [2] Jonas. [3] Salmon.

Upon which the said Court of France have issued orders accordingly, to the Commanders of their men-of-war and privateers, and Her Majesty having by a letter from the Earl of Sunderland, Principal Secretary of State, signified to me, to give the like orders to her ships of war and privateers; you are therefore in pursuance of Her Majesty's pleasure aforesaid, hereby required and directed, to give orders to the respective commanders of Her Majesty's ships and vessels of the fleet under your command, not to molest the French fishing boats, according to the terms of the said agreement, and you are to give the like orders to the commanders of such other ships or vessels as shall come within your reach that have not already received the same, sending an account to Secretary for my information, to whom you give the said orders.

Given under my hand this 8th May 1708.

GEORGE.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Addressed to Sir G. B. etc. in Town.

Whereas by my orders bearing date the 7th instant, you are directed to take under your command that part of Her Majesty's Fleet which is to be employed in and about the Soundings, the names whereof were mentioned in a list annexed to my said orders; and whereas several ships of the said squadron are now at sea, under command of the Lord Dursley, Vice Admiral of the Blue; you are hereby required and directed to repair to Spithead, and from thence you are, without loss of time, to proceed with such ships of the said squadron as shall be in readiness, and join those

which are with the Lord Dursley, as aforesaid, whose rendezvous, together with copies of the orders which I have sent him, you will herewith receive ; and you are to leave orders for such ships as shall not be ready to sail, to follow you.

When you shall be so joined, you are to cruise with the squadron under your command in such station or stations between Cape Finisterre, of the meridian of Cape Clear, as shall from time to time be judged most proper by a Council of War, not only for annoying the enemy but protecting the trade of Her Majesty's subjects and that of her Allies, coming into and going out of the channel, at which Council of War, not only all instructions which you have, or may receive from Her Majesty, and myself, as also all intelligences which you may gain of the preparations and proceedings of the enemy, are to be maturely considered ; and you are from time to time to transmit unto my Secretary for the information of myself, and my Council, an account of the Stations which shall be agreed on and of your proceedings.

And whereas there hath been advice received by the Packet Boat lately arrived from the West Indies of the Spanish Galleons and the Flota in those parts and particularly when the Flota may probably come from thence for Europe, I send you herewith a copy of the said intelligence ; and since the intercepting of the said Flota (if possible) is of the greatest importance to Her Majesty's service, you are therefore to have an especial regard to the doing thereof, and to use your utmost endeavours in the looking out for them in their passage, should they bend their course to any port of France, within the extent of your cruise, so far as the same may be consistent with such orders as you have

already, or may hereafter receive. But in regard there may be several merchant ships and vessels at Spithead and Portsmouth, outward bound, when you sail, you are to cause careful enquiry to be made for them, and take under your care and protection such of them as shall be ready, sending a ship or two before to Plymouth, to call out to you such ships of your squadron (if any) as may be there, and also the outward bound trades, which, and those you take with you from Spithead you are to cause to be seen well into the sea, to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy.

And in case the Lord Dursley shall not before you join him have performed what is directed by my orders of the 27th of this month (a copy whereof you will receive herewith) for the convoying the mast ships, and the rich trade from New England, from Kinsale to Plymouth, you are to take care that the said service be performed as soon and in such manner as you shall judge most proper, and that the ships from India be convoyed in like manner, in case they shall be come to Kinsale from the other ports of Ireland.

Given under my hand this 29th May 1708.

GEORGE.

Endorsed :—Received 2nd June.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK TO LORD DURSLEY

Addressed to Portsmouth.

You are hereby required and directed to take under your command Her Majesty's ships the Lennox and Orford, together with such cleaned, tallowed ships of the squadron designed for the

Soundings (mentioned in the list hereunto annexed) as are at Spithead or that shall come hither out of the Docks this Spring, and be ready to sail the first Easterly wind, and without loss of time proceed with them westward, and join the ships under command of Captain Owen, which have been fitted out at Plymouth, and with which he is ordered to proceed to sea. A copy of my orders to him are herewith sent you, that so you may know the better how to meet with him. And you are to leave orders with the Commanders of Her Majesty's ships which shall not be ready to sail with you, to follow and join you at such rendezvous as you shall appoint, if they shall receive no orders from myself, or Sir George Byng, Admiral of the Blue. In case the ships of war that are appointed convoys to Lisbon, the East Indies, Jamaica, Barbadoes, and the Leeward Islands (a list whereof is herewith sent you) shall not be sailed from Spithead, before you are ready to proceed to sea, you are to take them with you off of Plymouth, and there joining the aforesaid ships of war with Captain [Owen], you are to proceed with all the ships of war under your command, and the foreign convoys and trade, fifty leagues into the sea beyond Scilly, and having done so, you are to leave the said convoys to proceed on their respective voyages, and with the ships that shall then be under your command, you are to return and cruise in such station or stations in the Soundings as a Council of War shall judge most proper, for protecting the trade of Her Majesty's subjects and that of her allies, and annoying the enemy. And whereas there is [*sic*] advices as if the French do intend to join the ships which they are fitting out at Dunkirk to those at Brest and Rochefort, your Lordship is to endeavour to get the best intelligence you can of their naval

preparations and proceedings by sending a proper ship or ships into the port of Brest, to observe their motions, and you are to have a particular regard that the enemy do not with a superior strength get between the ships you command and those at Portsmouth, which are designed for the Soundings, as soon as they can be got ready.

But in case the foreign trade and their convoys shall sail from Spithead before your Lordship is ready, you are then to proceed into the Soundings, and use your best endeavours to join the ships under command of Captain Owen,[1] who when he has seen the trade into the sea, is ordered to cruise between Scilly and Ushant, but you are to call at Plymouth for such of the ships of the Soundings Squadron as may be there, ready to sail, and take them with you.

When you arrive at Plymouth you are to make enquiries there for the two ships named in the margin [2] hereof, bound to Bilboa, and in case they are not sailed, you are to take them under your care and protection and at such time as you shall judge most proper to detach two of the ships under your command, with orders to their Captains to proceed with the aforesaid two ships bound to Bilboa, and to accompany them so far as that they may go in safety into that port, and that so soon as they have done the same, they do return and join you in such station as you shall appoint.

And whereas four of the United East India Company ships are lately put into Galway, another into Battersbey [*sic*], and a sixth into Killibegs in Ireland; and the Company having desired that two ships of war may be forthwith appointed to fetch them to Kinsale, and a sufficient strength to convoy them from thence to England; you are

[1] Of the Medway (64).

[2] St. Antonio Pedro dela Hormaza, Juan Baptista de Escara.

therefore hereby required and directed, when a fitting opportunity presents for it, to detach some of the ships under your command to fetch the said East India ships to Kinsale, and to take care that they be convoyed from thence to Plymouth or Spithead as soon as conveniently may be.

And you are once in every ten days to send a ship into Plymouth for orders, with an account of your proceedings for my information.

Given under my hand this 11th May 1708.

GEORGE.

Soundings Squadron.

Orford, Canterbury	Spithead.
Lennox, Ipswich, Royal Oak, Bedford, Monck, August, Mary, Dover, Antelope	Portsmouth—cleaning.
Assurance	Plymouth, or coming from thence to Spithead.
Medway, Exeter, Salisbury, Worcester, Ludlow Castle	With Captain Owen or at Plymouth.
Aldbrough, Hawke, fireship	At Plymouth.
Pembroke	If she timely returns from the Downs to Spithead.

Foreign Convoys.

For Jamaica :	Monmouth.
	Jersey.
	Roebuck.
For Barbadoes :	Weymouth.
	Lark.
For the Leeward Island :	Adventure.
	Cruiser.
For St. Helena and the Cape :	Swallow.
	Leopard.
For Lisbon :	Berwick.
	Torbay.
	Bredah.
	Firme.
	Charles galley.
	Martha hospital ship.

ENCLOSURE No. 2.

PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK TO LORD DURSLEY

Whereas Her Majesty's Ship the Deptford, with a rich trade, and the ships with masts for the Navy are lately arrived at Kinsale from New England, where they wait for convoy; your Lordship is therefore hereby required and directed after you have parted with the out-ward bound trades (pursuant to my orders) either to proceed to Kinsale with your whole squadron and to detach such part thereof thither as you shall think fitting (according to the intelligence you may receive of the enemy) to convoy the said trade, or any other which may be there from Kinsale to Plymouth; but if you perform this

service yourself, you are not to come with them beyond the Lizard, but to detach such two ships as you judge most proper to see them safe into Plymouth with orders to their Captains to join you again, as soon as possibly may be, and with the rest of the squadron under your command, you are to put in execution your former orders, sending me an account of your proceedings.

Given etc. this 27th May 1708.

GEORGE.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Admiralty Office,
1st June, 1708.

Sir,—This will be brought to you by Mr. John Button, who is Son-in-law to Col. Foulkes of the Guards. He has passed his Examination some time since for a Lieutenant's Employ, and being desirous to serve in the Fleet under your command, I am directed by his Royal Highness to recommend him to you, that when vacancies of Lieutenants happen, you may provide for him according to his pretensions.

I am, Sir,
Your most humble servant,
J. BURCHETT.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Admiralty Office. 2 June 1708.

Sir,—Having received a letter from Mr. Dawson Secretary to the Lords Justices of Ireland, touching the Enemy's Privateers Cruising to the South

West of that Kingdom to look out for our West India Ships; I am commanded by his Royal Highness to send you an Extract of the said Letter enclosed for your information.

I am,

Your most humble servant,

J. BURCHETT.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Admiralty Office. 3rd June, 1708.

Sir,—It being represented to his Royal Highness that there are several outward bound ships in the Port of Topsham it is the pleasure of his Highness that you do send a ship before you off of the said Port to get them out, and to convoy them to Plymouth; and that if the masters of any of them are desirous to be seen into the Sea, you do give directions for its being done.

I take this opportunity of owning the receipt of your Letter of yesterday's date, I am,

Your most humble servant,

J. BURCHETT.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Admiralty Office. 4th June, 1708.

Sir,—I have received your letter of the 3rd of this month by Express, which with the account of the ships of War and Transports at Spithead hath been communicated to his Royal Highness and his Council.

For your sending the St. George and Bomb vessels into Portsmouth Harbour (as you have proposed) and taking so many of their Foremast

men as may enable yourself to go to Sea in the Royal Anne, and Sir John Jennings in the Triumph, his Royal Highness commands me to acquaint you that he consents to your doing the same; and as for your proceeding with those two ships and the Fireship to join the Squadron in the Soundings with the Lord Dursley, or staying till the Pembroke shall be cleaned at Portsmouth, and the Revenge, Humber, and Suffolk join you, his Royal Highness leaves it to you to do therein as you shall judge most for her Majesty's Service; but I am commanded to observe to you that the three last Ships are not yet Sail'd from the Buoys of the Nore, tho' their Commanders, as soon as mann'd will be hastened to Spithead without the loss of a moment's time, and if you sail before they arrive, or the Pembroke can be ready, you will leave orders for them where to join you, after you shall have taken care for seeing the outward bound trades safe into the sea, according to the Prince's Instructions to you.

As for the Transport Ships that lie ready at Spithead to receive Horse and Foot, and the Tender which you lately discharged from the Royal Anne I am commanded to acquaint you, that although this Office knows nothing more of the intended embarkation than of the two Regiments that are to be brought from Ireland to Spithead, concerning which his Royal Highness hath already given you Orders, that some of the ships of the Soundings Squadron shall be detached for Ireland on that Service; yet the Prince has no objection to your taking the Transports and Tender with you, (as you propose), in case it is her Majesty's pleasure you should so do, concerning which I have writ to the Earl of Sunderland, and the Deptford Mast Ships, and the ships from

New England, which are in that Kingdom, may take the opportunity of coming for England with this Convoy, and they are directed so to do.

It is to be hoped that the account is spurious which was sent from Galway the 21st of the last month, of the Enemy's having forced the East India Ships ashore in that Port; for upon enquiry, the Letter which is signed De Lorrain, is not his Lordships' writing; and since that, there has been [*sic*] Letters from Dublin of the 26th, and (as he said) from Galway too since the 21st, which mentions nothing of this matter.

In another part of your Letter you desire to know, whether when you shall have joined the Lord Dursley you will have a sufficient number of ships (exclusive of those to be sent for the Regiments in Ireland) to make two Divisions more, to look out for the Galleons and the French Squadron on the Coast of Ireland; in answer whereunto I am Commanded to acquaint you that although it is uncertain, from what is before mentioned, whether there is a Squadron of French Ships of War on the Irish Coast, yet is there advices that the Enemy have large Privateers cruising on the South East part of the said Coast in expectation of meeting with our Trade from the Plantations; and by all the accounts which have been yet received concerning the Galleons there is reason to think that they are not so near Europe, but that there may be time to clear the Coast of Ireland of the Enemy's Ships before you cruise for the intercepting the said Galleons in their passage from New Spain; the Prince his order to you dated the 29th of last month being a general Instruction to you for your whole Summer's expedition. However it is probable that you may, while at sea, gain further intelligence concerning them,

and of the Enemy; and if any orders come hither they will be sent to you, wherefore his Royal Highness would have you govern yourself therein, and in all other matters of moment, according as shall be judged by a Council of War most advantageous to the Public, with regard to such services as have been, or may be, recommended to your care.

And as to the latter part of your Letter, whereby you desire to know at what time, or with what number of ships you shall come in, regard being had to the embarkations with Soldiers designed for an expedition, wherein the fleet in the Channels is to co-operate and whether you shall come into Plymouth, Torbay, or Spithead; I have already acquainted you that this office hath yet no cognizance of the said expedition, and therefore it is not doubted but you will timely receive Instructions from her Majesty relating to that affair; so will those Instructions be a guide to you, in what manner you are to govern yourself with the Ships under your Command, and as the Prince has already given orders to the Lord Dursley to send a Ship into Plymouth once in every Ten days for orders so is it the pleasure of his Royal Highness that you do cause the same to be also done from time to time.

I send you herewith an account which I received this morning from a gentleman lately arrived from the Spanish West Indies, touching the Galleons and

I am, Sir,

Your most humble Servant,

J. BURCHETT.

Endorsed: Received the 6th at 7 in the morning.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Sir,—By my Letter of yesterday's date I acquainted you that I had sent to the Rt. Honourable the Earl of Sunderland, her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State, and desired his Lordship to receive her Majesty's pleasure, whether you should carry with you from Spithead the four Transport ships, and the Tender mention'd in your Letter received yesterday morning by Express; and his Lordship having informed me that it is her Majesty's pleasure you should take the four Transports with you (as you have proposed) for the bringing from Ireland part of the two Regiments there, I am commanded by his Royal Highness to signify his directions to you that you do the same accordingly; and his Lordship having further acquainted me, that directions are sent to the Commissioners for Transportation for taking up the Tender which you lately discharged from the Royal Anne; In case that can be done before you sail, it is the pleasure of his Highness that you do also take her with you.

I am, Sir,

Your most humble Servant,

J. BURCHETT.

Admty. Office.
5th June 1708.

Endorsed: Received by express the 6th at 7 in the morning.

FROM LORD DURSLEY

Orford at Sea
the Lizard N.E. by E. Dist. 12 Leagues.
June 6, 1708.

Sir,—I would a [*sic*] write to you sooner but I have not sent in any Ship till now I sent in the

Dover with two French Martinico men. We have been very unlucky since we been out [*sic*] for we have not so much as seen one Privateer in the Sea ; we met with these two of about 20 Leagues from Ushant they came out of Brest two days before. They say Mons. Deguy [1] Squadron is a fitting there but cannot be ready till July. They say Mons. Fourbin is to join him and then they will make in all twenty six sail. We shall all be foul long before that time for we are almost so already. If we could be cleaned towards the latter end of this month we might be as clean as Mons. Deguy's Ships and so have a fair chance to speak with some of them when they come out. We design to cruise from the Lat. of 47=00 to 49=30 between 20 and 30 Leagues, westing from Scilly. I shall send a Ship into Plymouth every week or ten days, if you have any commands for me, I am,

Your very humble Sert.,
DURSLEY.

Pray give my service to Sir John.[2]

Endorsed : Received the 22nd.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Admty. Office. 7th June 1708.

Sir,—This morning I received your two Letters of yesterday's date, which I have communicated to his Royal Highness.

As for the men belonging to the Royal Anne and St. George want of money is the reason they are not yet paid, and so soon as any can be had,

[1] Du Guay Trouin. [2] Jennings.

and that the ships come in again, they will be paid their wages.

I have sent to the Earl of Sunderland her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State to know whether her Maj. will please to have you directed to follow each order as you shall receive from the Queen herself, or by the hand of one of her Prinpl. Secretaries. I am sorry the westerly wind has prevented you sailing. I am, Sir,

Your most humble Sert.,

J. BURCHETT.

Endorsed : Received the 9th.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Admiralty Office,
9th June, 1708.

Sir,—Having this morning received a Letter from my Lord Dursley of the 6th inst. giving an account of his proceedings with the ships under his Command and of the station he cruises in ; I am commanded by the Prince to send you an extract of the said letter enclosed together with a copy of the Council of War fixing his rendezvous, for your information.

I am, Sir,

Your most humble Servant,

J. BURCHETT.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Sir,—Having received from Com. Wright [1] at Kinsale, an account that there were on the 4th of this month three French Privateers cruising off

[1] Captain Lawrence Wright was Commissioner at Kinsale Dockyard.

of the Old Head, the one of 56 Guns, the other of 32, and the third of 30, and that they had taken one of our Fishermen, I am commanded by his Royal Highness to word you the said account, I am, Sir,

Your most humble Servant,
J. BURCHETT.

Admiralty Office.
15 June 1708.

I send you herewith orders to follow the Queen's Orders.[1]

Endorsed: Received June 21 in Plymouth Sound.

ENCLOSURE.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

In pursuance of her Majesty's pleasure, signified by letter from the Rt. Honoble. the Earl of Sunderland to my Secretary dated the 12th instant, you are hereby required and directed to follow such Orders or Instructions as you shall from time to time receive from her Majesty by the hand of a Principal Secretary of State. For which this shall be your warrant. Dated this 14th of June 1708.

GEORGE.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Whereas there are a considerable body of her Majesty's Troops to be embarked at Portsmouth, which are to be employed on a sudden expedition;

[1] See Introductory Note.

and whereas there hath been several transport ships provided by the Commissioner for Transportation for the reception of the said Troops, you are hereby required and directed, when you return to Spithead, and when Lieut. Gen. Erle, who is to Command them, shall arrive at Portsmouth, to consult and advise with him concerning the aforesaid expedition ; and in case the transport ships cannot receive all the Forces, you are to endeavour to place the remainder on board the ships of War under your Command, in such manner as you shall judge most proper, with regard to the distance of the place where they are to be employed, and the health of the seamen moving on board the said Ships. Given under my hand this 23 June, 1708.

GEORGE.

Endorsed : Received the 27th.

FROM LORD GODOLPHIN

June 26, 1708.

Sir,—I have received the favour of several letters from you, which I have forborne to answer till I heard you were at Plymouth, thinking indeed, I should possibly see you here again almost as soon as any letter could reach you, and I am still of opinion you will think it necessary to come to Spithead, by the time you can compute the regiments will arrive from Ireland.

I have reason to be confirmed in my opinion, that Sir John Jennings and your refusing to be at the Prince's Council was a wrong step, and may give handle to your prejudice ; nobody can ever build a house that won't be contented to lay the foundation of it by degrees ; however, it will not hinder me from endeavouring to do you all the service in my power.

I hear the Queen of Portugal is going to be in Holland by the beginning of August ; my notion of that matter is, that she must be brought from thence to Spithead by Baker's Squadron, and upon her arrival that notice must be sent to you upon the Coast of France and if the ships from Ireland have a good wind, you may have time sufficient to go the distance [?] there before she comes.

I am very Sincerely Sir,
Yr. most faithful humble Servant,
GODOLPHIN.

My service to Sir John Jennings.

FROM CAPTAIN WILLIAM PASSENGER

Royal Oak. 28 June 1708.

Honble. Sir,—The Surgeon of the Royal Oak having no necessaries for the support of the sick men on board, nor was not supplied [*sic*] with any at Portsmouth at the fitting the ship out, being none come from London by Order of the Navy board, but was on the road when we sailed,

I humbly pray you'll be pleas'd to give your Order to Mr. Opie of Plymouth to supply him with three months' necessaries for the complement of her Maj. Ship Royal Oak and I am, honble. Sir,

Your honour's most humble and
Obedient Servant,
W. PASSENGER.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

You are hereby required and directed, immediately upon your receipt hereof, to send away three

of the ships of the Fleet under your Command to Ireland, such as you shall think most proper, to bring the two Regiments of Foot from Cork to Spithead, in pursuance of my Orders to you of the 31st of the last month.

And whereas I have received advice, that the French are preparing a Fleet at Brest, and Land Forces to surprise Jersey and Guernsey, copy of which advice comes enclosed ; you are therefore hereby required and directed immediately to put to sea, with the rest of the Fleet under your Command, and proceed to Jersey, Guernsey and St. Malo, in order to intercept the aforesaid Fleet of the Enemy, and upon your meeting with them, to use your utmost endeavour to take, sink, burn or otherwise destroy them. But if you shall find that the Enemy's Fleet has been at the Islands and are gone to the Eastward, you are in that case to make the best of your way with the Fleet under your Command to Spithead, and remain there till further Orders ; And if they have been there and gone Westward, you are then to repair to Plymouth there to expect further Orders. But if you cannot hear of the Enemy's Fleet, either at the Islands or St. Malo's you are, in that case, to make the best of your way to Plymouth as aforesaid.

And whereas there are now at Milford, five ships which arrived there lately from Virginia, you are to order the Greyhound, which is either at Plymouth or Falmouth, to proceed forthwith to Milford haven and convoy the said Ships, and any other Trade which may be there, to Plymouth and remain there till further Orders ; And in case she shall be in want of Provisions or Stores to perform this Service, you are to cause her to be immediately supplied therewith.

And I having ordered the Suffolk and Humber

now at St. Helens to convoy the Trade from thence to Plymouth, and there take under their Command the Deptford and the Trade which came with her from Ireland, and all others, and convoy them in safety to the Downs ; You are to order the Dartmouth to proceed in Company of them therein, and that they do carry with them the Trade lately arrived from the Canaries, ordering the Deptford and Dartmouth to convoy all the aforesaid Trade from the Downs to the Nore, there to expect further Orders.

And whereas I have ordered Sixty Marines of the Queen's own Regiment at Plymouth, which are to serve in the Resolution, to embark on board the Deptford, you are to order her Commanders to receive them accordingly, to victual them in their passage and to put them on board the Resolution, upon her arrival at the Nore ; But if the said Marines shall not be ready to embark you are not to stop her upon that account. Given under My hand this 29th June 1708.

GEORGE.

FROM CAPTAIN PHILIP CAVENDISH

Sir,—There is one Edward Russell on board the Royal Anne who deserted lately from the Ship under my Command. I desire you will be pleased to call him to an account for the said offence and remain

Sir,

Your most obedient and most humble Servant,

PHIL. CAVENDISH.

Antelope, June 28th 1708.

COURT MARTIAL

At a Court Martial held on board her Majesty's Ship Royal Anne in Plym. Sound 29th June 1708.

PRESENT :—

Sir George Byng Adml. of the Blue. President.
Sir John Jennings Vice Adml. of the Red.
Lord Dursley Vice Adml. of the Blue.

Capt. Charles Cornwall.	Capt. Edward Rumsey.
Capt. Thomas Stepney.	Capt. Rich. Canning.
Capt. Wm. Passenger.	Capt. Charles Fotherby.
Capt. Fran. Hosier.	Capt. Thomas Matthews.
Capt. George Walton.	Capt. Bar. Candler.
Capt. Salmon Morrice.	Capt. Jam. Monypenny.

All duly sworn pursuant to a late Act of Parliament.

Edward Russell belonging to her Majesty's Ship the Antelope was accused and tried for deserting from that Ship when she went into Hamoaze to clean the 22nd of December 1707.

Upon enquiring into this matter, the said Edward Russell acknowledging that he did belong to the Antelope, but pleading in his defence, that he went ashore to see his friends about fourteen miles in the country, and hearing that the Antelope was sailed, went up to London, and entered there for the Royal Anne. But it appearing to the Court that he had no leave to go into the country, and that he took no manner of pains to return to his ship, though she stayed at Plymouth five weeks before she went to sea, but that he entered himself for the Royal Anne three weeks after his desertion from the Antelope, and he having nothing farther to urge in his defence.

The Court is of Opinion, that the said Edward Russell is guilty of a very high misdemeanour in leaving his duty on board the Antelope, and does adjudge him to fall under the three and thirtieth Article of the Statute of the thirteenth of King Charles the Second, and does accordingly adjudge the said Edward Russell to be carried in a Boat to-morrow morning at eight of the clock by the side of ten ships of this Squadron, with a halter about his neck, and his hands tied to the mast and that he do receive ten lashes on his bare back with a Cat of Nine Tails by the side of each ship, and that his crime be there declared by beat of Drum, and a Boat from every Ship in the Squadron with a Lieutenant in her, do attend the Execution of his Sentence.

G. Byng.
J. Jennings.
Dursley.
Cha. Cornwall.
Tho. Stepney.
W. Passenger.
F. Hosier.
G. Walton.
S. Morrice.
E. Rumsey.
R. Canning.
Charles Fotherby.
Tho. Mathews [*sic*].
Barth. Candler.
J. Monypenny.

FROM CAPTAIN THOMAS MATTHEWS

Sir,—One John Lightfoot now on board the Pembroke having deserted from her Maj. ship Dover under my Command, I desire he may be tried at a Court Martial in hopes to deter others from the like.

I am, Sir,
Your most Humble Servant,
Thos. Matthews [*sic*].

Dover, Plymouth Sound.
June the 28th 1708.

COURT MARTIAL

At a Court Martial held on board her Majesty's Ship Royal Anne in Plymouth Sound this 29th June 1708.

PRESENT :—

Sir George Byng Adml. of the Blue. President.
Sir John Jennings Vice Adml. of the Red.
Lord Dursley Vice Adml. of the Blue.

Capt. Charles Cornwall.
Capt. Thomas Stepney.
Capt. William Passenger.
Capt. Francis Hosier.
Capt. George Walton.
Capt. Salmon Morrice.
Capt. Edward Rumsey.
Capt. Philip Cavendish.
Capt. Charles Fotherby.
Capt. Bartholomew Candler.
Capt. James Monypenny.

All duly sworn pursuant to a late Act of Parliament.

Enquiry was made by the Court into the Accusation of Capt. Thomas Matthews Commander of her Majesty's Ship the Dover against John Lightfoot for deserting from the said Ship at Portsmouth the 1st of April 1707.

Upon Examination of this matter, the said John Lightfoot owning that he did belong to the Dover, but pleading in his defence, that he had leave from the First Lieutenant to go ashore to Portsmouth, and finding himself ill, went up to London, and ere he returned, the Ship was gone to sea again. It not appearing that he had leave to go up to London, as he alleges, but that the Ship stayed at Portsmouth and Spithead some considerable time after he left her, and it appearing farther by his own confession that he entered

himself on board a Merchant Ship bound to Russia, which Merchant Ship was afterwards taken by a Privateer of France, and that after his return to England, he was imprest by the Lieutenant of the Pembroke on board which ship he now served.

The Court does unanimously adjudge the said John Lightfoot to fall under the Seventeenth Article [1] of the Statute of the Thirteenth of King Charles the Second, and the Court does condemn the said John Lightfoot to be hanged by the neck at the Main Yard on board her Maj. Ship the Dover (which ship he deserted from) until he be dead.

G. Byng.	G. Walton.
J. Jennings.	S. Morrice.
Dursley.	E. Rumsey.
Cha. Cornwall.	Phil. Cavendish.
Tho. Stepney.	Charles Fotherby.
W. Passenger.	Barth. Candler.
F. Hosier.	J. Monypenny.

FROM LORD DURSLEY

Orford off Plymo. the 29th of June 1708.

Sir,—Yesterday about 4 o'clock we saw three sail of ships off the Lands End, one of them about 50 Guns and the other 30 and the last about 20 as near as we could judge. They showed the French Colours and we gave them chase, and as I thought came up with them, which made me continue to do so all night. They steered away S.E. for their own coast and we kept that course all night, when it was day light we saw them

[1] Dealing with desertion.

right ahead of us but a good deal farther off of us than they were when we saw them last night, so gave over chase and steered over for our own coast. The Pembroke joined me this morning and brought me your letter, and the Captain told me he believed you were in Plymouth Sound. Several of the ships that are with me want beer and some of them will bread, if to continue out any time when we join you. So I believe it would be proper for us to come in and supply ourselves with what we want. I will anchor here to-night till I know your answer. We have had very ill luck since we been out, for these are the only privateers we have seen since we been a cruising, and I wish I had not seen them for they have made me have an ill opinion of all our ship's sailing.

I am, Sir,

Your Humble Servant,

DURSLEY.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Whereas I am informed by the copy of a Letter which hath been transmitted to my Secry. by the Earl of Sunderland her Majesty's Principal Secry. of State, from Col. Colier, that the Ships in the Road of St. Malo, which were supposed to be a squadron of the Enemy's ships of war, are merchant ships under the care only of two small Convoys, insomuch that the alarm the Islands of Guernsey and Jersey were under on that account, is now over, and consequently no occasion for your repairing thither with the squadron of her Majesty's ships under your command, You are therefore hereby required and directed to put in execution the order which you have received, for

proceeding into the Sea with the outward bound Trades, and such other services as are recommended to your care; but you are to detach three such ships as you shall judge the most proper for bringing the two Regiments from Ireland.

Dated at Windsor this 30th June 1708.

GEORGE.

Endorsed: Received 4 July.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Whereas with your Letter of the 29th past you have transmitted unto me the Copy of a Complaint made by Thomas Skiles, Master of the Salisbury, against a Serjeant of the Marines Soldiers on board the said ship, for striking him, which I think fit to have examined into at a Court Martial; You are therefore hereby required and directed to cause the same to be examined into at a Court Martial accordingly, for holding whereof you are empowerd by my Warrant already sent you.

Given under my hand at Windsor this 3rd July 1708.

GEORGE.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Windsor, 3rd July 1708.

Sir,—Your Letter of the 29th of the last month from Plymouth Sound hath been communicated to his Royal Highness and his Council, and this brings you orders from his Highness, for

your repairing to St. Helens with the Squadron of her Majesty's ships under your command.

The Queen will pardon John Lightfoot who deserted from the Dover, and has been sentenced to die by a Court Martial: however you will order him to be kept in irons till further direction concerning him; and herewith I send you the Prince his orders for trying at a Court Martial the difference between the Master of the Salisbury and the Serjeant of the Marines on board the said ship, it being the pleasure of his Royal Highness that you do let the Marine Officers know, that so long as they and their men shall be in Service on board her Maj. ships, they must be subject to the Maritime Laws, settled by Act of Parliament in the Reign of King Charles the Second.

If you do sail from Plymouth before this arrives, it will be brought after you by the Swallow Prize.

I am, Sir,

Your most humble servant,

J. BURCHETT.

Endorsed: Received.

ENCLOSURE.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Notwithstanding any former orders which you have received, you are hereby required and directed, immediately upon your receipt hereof, to make the best of your way with all her Majesty's ships under your command, except those which you sent to Ireland for the Regiments, to St. Helens, and remain there till further Order, taking care that the said ships be kept in a constant readiness to proceed on service and that the

transport ships at Portsmouth or Spithead be forthwith put into a condition to receive the troops on board, so soon as Orders shall be given for the same.

Dated at Windsor this 3rd of July, 1708.

GEORGE.

Endorsed : Received the 6th.

FROM LORD SUNDERLAND

Windsor, July 3rd, 1708.

Sir,—I am just come to this place with the ill news, that a Flanders mail brought us last night, that the French had seized upon Ghent, Bruges and Plassendael, but to balance it, we had an account of Prince Eugene's being with Ld. Marlborough's army, of their marching towards the French army which retired before them, and in their retreat lost a thousand horse, so that we have reason to expect every moment the account of a battle which may recover all ; you will receive by this express orders from the Prince to return with the Fleet to St. Helens ;[1] that you may be in a readiness to embark the troops, and to sail with the first notice where it may be most necessary ; I am extremely out of order, with a violent head-ache so that I must beg you to excuse this short letter, and allow me only to thank you for the favour of yours of 9th, 27th and 29th June, and to tell you that I mentioned to Ld. Treasurer what you writ about Sir Staff. Fairborne and he said you need be in no pain ; but words are but words,

[1] These orders are dated 4th July and merely repeat in shorter form the Prince's previous orders of 3rd July.

however, I beg you to depend upon my doing everything in my power, to serve you upon this, and all other occasions, being with the greatest truth and esteem, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

SUNDERLAND.

The orders that were sent you in relation to your following the directions you should receive from a Secretary of State, meant no more but upon any extraordinary or secret occasion, for otherwise your ordinary orders will come just as they used from the Admiralty.

Endorsed: Received 6th July.

FROM THE QUEEN

ANNE R. [sig.]

[Stamped impression of Royal Seal]

Instructions for our Trusty and Welbeloved Sir George Byng Knt. Admiral of the Blue Squadron of Our Fleet, and Commander in Chief of our Fleet to be employed in the present intended Expedition. Given at our Castle of Windsor, the 8th day of July 1708 In the Seventh Year of our Reign.

Whereas Our Dearest Consort Prince George of Denmark Our High Admiral has appointed you to command Our Fleet designed for an expedition against the Common Enemy; You are hereby

required and directed to give all the assistance you are able to the speedy embarking Our Land Forces that are to accompany Our said Fleet, which being done, you are with the first opportunity of wind and weather, to sail with Our ships of War, Transports and other vessels appointed for this expedition to the coasts of Normandy or Brittany, where being arrived, you are to give your utmost assistance in all respects to debark Our said Forces, and the Artillery, Stores and Provisions, which shall be thought proper, in such place or places as shall be judged most expedient for annoying the Enemy, and you are to reinforce them with a Body of Six-hundred Marines from on board Our Ships under Your Command.

For the better protecting and securing the landing of the said Troops, You are with the Fleet under your Command, or such part of it as shall be thought proper, either to ride at anchor or keep under Sail, as shall be judged most expedient.

Our Troops being landed, and the Artillery, Stores and Provisions put on shore as before directed, you are to consider with the General of Our Land Forces, how and in what manner Our Fleet, with regard to its safety, may best assist Our Forces, and render their attempts at land most secure and effectual.

You are, on all opportunities and occasions, to use your utmost endeavours to take, sink, burn, or otherwise destroy all ships and vessels belonging to the Enemy, either at Sea, or in their Ports, and to render Our Forces as offensive to them as may be.

In case you are in want of water or fresh Provisions, and can be supplied with them on the

Enemy's Coast, you are hereby permitted and empowered to make a Truce with Them on those occasions.

You shall consider at a Council of War, at what time it shall be proper with regard to the Season of the Year to depart from those coasts, and give timely notice thereof to the General of Our Land Forces.

In case by reason of any insuperable difficulties in attempting to land Our Forces on the coast of France as aforesaid, or in taking Post there, or by the too powerful opposition of the Enemy, or the badness of the weather, you are obliged to re-embark the Troops, you are to give us the earliest notice thereof that shall be possible, and to repair with the Fleet to Jersey, Guernsey, or such other Station as shall be thought proper, of which you shall give us notice, and there to expect Our further Orders.

In the Execution of these Our Instructions, or of any other matters and things not here expressed, which Our Service shall require, and which may tend to the annoyance of the Enemy you are to govern yourself by the advice and opinion of a Council of War, which Council shall consist of Flag-Officers, when such matters are to be therein proposed and debated as relate only to the Service at Sea, and of the said officers, and the Commander in Chief and other General Officers of Our Land Forces, when such things are to be considered of as relate to the Service both at Sea and Land.

You are from time to time to correspond with one of Our Principal Secretaries of State, and to give him an Account of all Proceedings upon this Expedition by Sea, that We may be informed thereof. And you are to observe and follow such

further Orders and Instructions as We shall think fitt to send you, either under Our Signet, and Sign Manual, or by Letters from either of Our said Secretaries.

AR.

[*The letter is in a clerk's handwriting*]

(*Countersigned*) SUNDERLAND.

Endorsed: Received 12th at Windsor.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Windsor. 9th July 1708.

Sir,—I have received your two letters of yesterday's date by Express, giving an account of your arrival at Spithead, which I read this morning to his Royal Highness.

I am commanded by his Royal Highness to acquaint you that he has sent Orders for stopping the three frigates in Ireland, which you sent thither to Convoy the two Regiments to Spithead, and they are directed from Cork to Kinsale, and there to complete their provisions to six months, for their highest complements of Men at whole allowance.

The aforesaid two Regiments are designed on Service at Newfoundland, and, it being necessary that two ships of war should be sent to the three in Ireland as soon as may be, and that they and the two frigates particularly appointed to convoy the Trade to Newfoundland should proceed thither together; It is the pleasure of his Royal Highness, that you do not only forthwith consider what two ships under your Command may be most proper for the said Service, but that you

do give me an account, for the information of his Highness, of the names of the said Ships, which are to be victualled for six months at whole allowance, and to carry the Officers and Recruits of the two Regiments to Ireland.

His Royal Highness would also have you consult with Lt. General Erle concerning this Expedition, and then consider what Flag Officer, or what private Captain under your Command, may be most proper to Command the Ships of War, with respect not only to the effectual putting in execution the service which shall be recommended, but to the good correspondence between him and the Land Officers which are to be employed in the aforesaid expedition.

This comes to you by Express, and I am to desire that you will return me your answer hither by the same conveyance, that so I may have it before Sunday night, at which time it will be considered what Instructions may be necessary to give to the Officers Commanding both at sea and on shore.

I am to desire that you will keep this intended expedition very private ; and since that is so very necessary, I have not only sent this, but copied it too with my own hand.

The Prince Commands me to acquaint you, that he does approve of the Orders which you have given to the Cruisers and other ships of which you have given a particular acc. in your two Letters. I am,

Sir,

Your most humble Servant,

J. BURCHETT.

Endorsed : Received by Express
12 at night.

FROM LORD GODOLPHIN

Windsor. July 9, 1708.

Sir,—I am very glad to hear by yours of July 8th that you are arrived at Spithead, and using all your diligence for the speediest embarking of the Troops; Lieut. General Erle, who is acquainted with all the Services expected from the Fleet and the Troops, will concert with you from time to time the properest measures for putting them in execution.

If the cross winds would have allowed the ships' transport and frigates to fetch 2 regiments from Ireland to have got thither in time, it was always intended that as soon as the whole Fleet was under sail for the Coast of France, a competent number of ships with 2 regiments should have been detached to seize upon Newfoundland, and take the post of Placentia, which we are assured may very easily be done with that force, by a person who has been long upon the place, and is now with Lt. G. Erle; but since the winds have hindered the doing it in this manner as was first proposed, orders are given to stop the 3 ships in Ireland already sent thither; you will have Orders to join 2 more to them, besides the Newfoundland Convoy, and they are to take the regiments with them from Ireland, and proceed straight to Placentia. It remains still to appoint a prudent Officer for the Command of this Squadron, and one whose temper will incline him to agree with the 2 Colonels of those regiments, Lepell and Munden. This is a service of great consequence, and if the winds will allow convenient despatch to be used, the Squadron may arrive just at a time to seize all the fishing, as well as the place itself; I know not who you will

propose to the Command of the Squadron, but I should think you might easily spare either Sir J. Jennings or Lord Dursley, for your Fleet will be left too weak for 3 Flags, and indeed for the other service you are to go upon, but that we have assurancy from Holland that they will continue their Squadron before Dunkirk, and hinder Fourbin from coming out to join the Brest Squadron ; The sooner you can get the troops embarked, it will now be the better, since you will probably find the coast of France under a good deal of consternation upon the news of their Army's being beaten by the D. of Marlborough. Not having time to write by this Express to Lt. Gen. Erle, I must beg the favour of you to communicate this letter to him, and to be assured, I am very Sincerely,

Your most faithfull humble Servant,

GODOLPHIN.

When the Queen of Portugal shall arrive at Spithead, you will be called for home from the Coast of France, to Convoy her, and most of the troops with you to Lisbon.

Endorsed : Received by Express 12th.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Windsor. 10th July 1708.

Sir,—I have received your Letter of yesterday's date, by express, which I have read to his Royal Highness, and this I send to you by the same conveyance under cover of the Commissioner at Portsmouth, to whom, for saving time, I have signified the Prince his pleasure, that he does cause to be immediately built in the Yard there twelve flat bottomed Boats, as you have proposed.

As to the Victualling the Squadrons of her Majesty's ships under your Command, it is the pleasure of his Royal Highness that during your stay at Spithead, or St. Helens, you do cause their provisions to be completed to four months for their highest complements of men at whole allowance, or so much thereof as can be taken on board by the time that you shall be ready to proceed on the intended expedition; but the two ships which you shall make a choice of to join the three gone to Ireland, must be victualled for six months at whole allowance.

As to the transports, the Capt. of the Swiftsure has orders to convoy them from the Downs to Spithead, and the Tiger and Flambrough, which are going Westward from Rear Admiral Baker, have orders to call in the Downs, and to carry with them to Spithead all merchant ships and vessels bound their way, so that I hope you will have them with the first spurt of wind. I am,

Sir,

Your most humble Servant,

J. BURCHETT.

Endorsed: Received by Sir John Jennings the 10th at night who gave proper directions therein.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Whereas you have received her Majesty's Instructions to proceed on an expedition with the Land Forces under the Command of Lieut. General Erle; I do hereby empower and direct you to take with you on that service such and so many of the Ships of war which have been put

under your Command, as are now at Spithead, or shall come there before you sail, as shall be thought most proper, upon your advising with him the said Lieutenant General Erle, and the Flag Officers with you.

But in regard her Majesty's Ship the Royal Anne, where you do at present bear your Flag, is designed for the reception of her Maj., the Queen of Portugal, in her passage from Spithead to Lisbon, you are therefore to send her into Portsmouth harbour, that so she may be fitted in all respects for that service; And the Mary and Pembroke, you are to order to be Victualled to Six Months for their highest Complements of Men at whole allowance, and that they be kept in constant readiness to proceed to Ireland, pursuant to such Orders as I shall send them.

Given under my hand at Windsor this 13th of July 1708.

GEORGE.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Windsor. 13th July 1708.

Sir,—I send you herewith the Prince his Orders relating to the expedition on which you are going; and there being an account received that the Exeter and Monck are arrived at Spithead, and the Salisbury disabled in her rudder at Plymouth, insomuch that it is probable those ships will not so timely arrive in Ireland, as to proceed with the two Regiments from thence by the first of the next month, the Instructions for the said ships, and the other two you are to join to them, are deferred until that matter can be considered tomorrow night at the Cockpit by the Lords of the

Council; However, it is the pleasure of his Royal Highness that you do cause the provisions of the Exeter, Monck, Mary, and Pembroke to be completed to six months at whole allowance as soon as may be. I am,

Sir,
Your most humble Servant,
J. BURCHETT.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

In pursuance of the Orders of the Lords of the Cabinet Council, you are hereby required and directed, notwithstanding any former Orders to the contrary, to order the Exeter to remain at Spithead, with the Transport Ships she brought with her thither, till further Orders, and that the Monck does the like when she arrives there. But you are to cause these two ships, as also the Mary and Pembroke to be victualled up to six months at whole allowance for their highest complements of men, furnished with what Stores they shall be in want of, and kept in a constant readiness in all respects to proceed on the Service they were designed.

Given under my hand this 14 July 1708.
GEORGE.

FROM LORD SUNDERLAND

Whitehall. 14th July 1708.

Sir,—The Committee of the Lords of the Council met at my Office this evening, who considering that the transports are delayed by contrary winds from getting out of the Downs to join you, have directed me to let you know that

they think it would be more for the service of the present expedition that you should make use of what transport Ships you have with you to embark as many of the troops as they can carry, and put the rest on board the Men of War, and so proceed without loss of time upon the designed expedition. You will please to concert this with Lieut. Gen. Erle and the Comm. of the Transports now with you that it may be done in the best manner. I send you, as you desired, letters for the Governors of Jersey and Guernsey to assist you with Pilots, and wishing you all imaginable success I remain with great truth

Sir,

Your most faithful humble servant,

SUNDERLAND.

Endorsed: Received 15th by Express at 8 in the evening.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Windsor. 15th July 1708.

Sir,—This morning at two a clock [*sic*] I received your letter by express and this brings you by the same conveyance the Prince his orders, relating to some of the ships which were lately ordered to Ireland. His Royal Highness approves of the directions you have given for graving and tallowing the Canterbury and the Commissioners for Victualling are writ to to hasten provisions to Portsmouth for supply of the ships you command, against your return with them to Spithead.

I this morning received a letter from Sir John Jennings, touching his late desire, by letter to Mr. Churchill, of the Prince his leave to go to the Bathe [*sic*], for recovering of his health.

Mr. Churchill is not now at Windsor, but upon reading Sir John's letter to the Prince, his Highness was pleased to command to signify his directions to you, that you do give him leave to the Bathe for six weeks as he has desired; and his Royal Highness thinks he had better go thither now, than at the latter season of the year, because the service may then more necessarily require him, either to proceed with the squadron that is to convoy the Queen of Portugal to Lisbon, which will require two Flag Officers at least, or to command in the Soundings.

My Lord Dursley went from hence to London yesterday, but I hope he will be time enough at Spithead, to proceed with you on the present expedition, wherein I heartily wish you good success, and am

Sir, Your most humble servant,
J. BURCHETT.

Endorsed: Received 16th at one in the morning by Express.

FROM LORD SUNDERLAND

Whitehall. July 16th 1708.
six a clock.

Sir,—I have just now received yours of yesterday's date, which I have read to Lord Treasurer. I am sorry to find the Transports are so scanty but since all the use that can be hoped for from this Expedition is taking the advantage of the Present Consternation they are in in France and that therefore time is all, it is both Ld. Treasurer's opinion, and mine, that you should make the most you can of the Transports you have with you (I mean as well those design'd for Ireland as the

others, that design of Newfoundland being now out of doors, by the lateness of the season) and considering how little way you are to carry them, the troops may the better bear to be a little more crowded and I should think with your own Men of War, and those design'd for Ireland, you might make a shift to put on board five or six hundred men more than you mention, and then there might be room in the transports for the Dragoons, however, this must be left to your prudence, dispatch is the main thing to be recommended. I don't doubt but you and Lieut. Gen. Erle and Sir John Jennings will do everything for the best. I beg my humble service to them both, and that you would tell Lieut. Gen. Erle that the Manifestoes are in the Press, and shall be sent to him, as I hope by Monday tho' I fear there will not be any great occasion for them ; I wish you all good success, and am ever with the greatest truth, and friendship and esteem,

Sir,

Your most faithful humble servant,

SUNDERLAND.

Ld. Treasurer is just gone to Windsor and will acquaint the Queen with what I have now writ to you.

Endorsed : Received by Express the 17th at 8 in the evening.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Windsor. July 17th, 1708.

Sir,—This morning I received two Letters from you by Express, and I have read them to his Royal Highness, and delivered that which

came enclos'd to my Lord High Treasurer, who has directed me to give his Service to you, and to let you know that his Lordp. will send you an answer thereunto by the Despatches which will be sent away tomorrow night from hence: In the meanwhile it is the pleasure of his Royal Highness, that you do make what despatch you can in shipping off the Troops from the Isle of Wight, not only on board the Ships of War, as well those which were designed for Ireland as the others, but the Transport ships also which were to take in the two Regiments there, in regard the season of the year is too far advanced to admit of their going on their late intended expedition, and concerning this you may expect that Orders will be sent to you tomorrow night; this being only for saving time.

There are orders gone to the Navy Board for fitting the Royl. Anne for the reception of the Queen of Portugal, and they will be directed to furnish her with the several particulars mention'd in the Paper which was enclosed in one of your Letters. I am, Sir,

Your most humble Servant,

J. BURCHETT.

Endorsed: Received by Express the 18th at 2 in the morning.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Notwithstanding any former Orders which have been given for the Ships named in the margin,[1] their proceeding to Ireland, you are hereby

[1] Pembroke, Mary, Monck, Exeter

required and directed to take such of them as are or shall come to Spithead before you sail from thence, under your Command, and employ them in the Expedition whereon you are ordered, as likewise all the Transport Ships which are appointed to take in the two Regiments in Ireland: And you are also to carry with you on the said Expedition the four Bomb Vessels mentioned in the margin [1] hereof, their respective Captains being hereby required to obey your Orders: And since the aforesaid ships Pembroke, Exeter, Monck and Mary are not now to proceed on the Service lately designed, you are to give directions, that notwithstanding former Orders, such of them as are with you, be now only Victualled to Four Months at whole allowance for their highest Complements of Men, or so much thereof as they can take in without interruption to you in your Sailing.

Given under my hand this 19th July 1708.

GEORGE.

Endorsed: Received by Lord Dursley 21 July, 1708.

FROM LORD SUNDERLAND

Whitehall. July 21st, 1708.

Sir,—I send you enclos'd your Instructions for this expedition of St. Valery, and I am further Commanded by the Queen, to let you know that it is her pleasure, that you should send for the Troops that are in Ireland, I mean the two regiments of Leppell and Munden, whenever you and

[1] Furnace — Salamander
Carcass — Star

Lieut. Gen. Erle shall think it for the Service, the time and manner of doing it being left wholly to your discretion. I have nothing to add, but to wish you all good success, and to assure you, that I am ever with great truth,

Sir,

Your most faithful humble servant,

SUNDERLAND.

Endorsed:—Received by a messenger sent express the 22 at noon.

ENCLOSURE.

FROM THE QUEEN

ANNE R. [sig.]

[Stamped impression of the Royal Seal]

Instructions for Our Trusty and Well beloved Sir George Byng Knt; Admiral of the Blue and Admiral and Commander in Chief of Our Fleet. Given at Our Castle at Windsor the twentieth day of July 1708, In the seventh year of Our Reign.

Whereas by Our Instructions of the eighth instant you were commanded and requir'd to repair with the Fleet under your Command, and the Forces embarked on the Transports with you, to some parts of the Coasts of Normandy or Brittany, there to land the said Troops, in order to annoy the enemy in those Parts and whereas we have reason to believe that in the present posture of Our affairs, it may be more for Our Service, to land the said Troops near Saint Valery, on the Coast of Picardy.

You are hereby directed and required, forthwith to repair, with the Fleet, under your Command, and the Forces embark'd on the Transports with you, as near the said port of Saint Valery as may be, and there to land the said forces, and otherwise to act, as you shall judge most proper for the Service, in conjunction with Lieutenant General Erle, and by the advice of Councils of War, according to Our former Instructions of.

AR.

[*The letter is in Sunderland's handwriting, but is signed and initialled by the Queen.*]

OPINION OF THE PILOTS

The Opinions of the Guernsey and Jersey Pilots sent from those Islands, and of the Pilots in the Fleet, of the Coast of France from Cape Fréhel to Boulogne Bay, by a strict and careful consultation held on board the Triumph the 25th July 1708.

That under Cape Fréhel ships may anchor but not very convenient for a Fleet, and bad for a N.W. or Northerly Wind, and no landing there.

St. Malo is well known to be much better fortified than it was in the last War, neither can a Fleet come nearer than 3 or 4 Miles of it.

Cancale is a very good Bay for Ships to ride in, with any Wind, and Men may be landed, but by being so near St. Malo as 4 Leagues, they will be always sure of a good Number of men to oppose their landing.

The Bay of Grandance [Granville ?] to the Southward of the Bay of Alderney [Auderville ?]

is a good Bay for anchoring and very good landing with an Easterly Wind, but with a Westerly Wind the Surf falls so heavy on the Shore that 'tis not possible to land.

In Cherbourg Bay is good riding for a Fleet with Westerly Winds, but not to the Northward of the West, but the landing is difficult, being under the command of their Forts and Batteries; the Town of Cherbourg is open in many places to the land, the Works demolished by the King of France's Order.

Eastward of that no riding for the Fleet nor landing men till you come to La Hogue Bay, there is good anchoring and landing men with Westerly Winds, but the Fortifications do command most of the shore you can land on, and there is entrenchments [*sic*] thrown up against the good landing places of that Bay.

At the River Grand Vay [Vie ?] there is so great an indraught, and the tides so very strong, and the shoals lie so far out, that we care not to venture anchoring there with our own small Privateers and by no means a place to land men.

From thence to the River Seine an ill coast and very foul ground for ships to ride and as ill a coast for men to land on.

From Havre Du Grace to Dieppe the coast the same, no Security for a Fleet and Transports to ride on till you come of Dieppe itself, that place the Enemy have well fortified, since the attack the Fleet made when they Bombarded it, but the shore to land on is very ill with Westerly Winds.

To the Eastward of Dieppe we are not well acquainted but conceive there is very great difficulty to find a convenient Road for the Fleet and Transports to anchor near the River Somme and the Etaples, so as to cover the landing of men;

and more difficult to find a place to land the Army with a Westerly Wind, the Sea falling wholly on the shore, and a great surf that we think it impracticable, but with Easterly Winds all along from Boulogne to the Etaples, and between Caen and Bourg d'Authie, we conceive men may land, but we will not take charge to carry the Fleet near the shore so as to cover their landing: for the Ships that sail out of the River Somme or St. Valery, usually take in Pilots at Dieppe or Tréport to carry them into that River.

Copy.

COUNCIL OF WAR

At a Council of War held at Portsmouth 25th July 1708.

PRESENT.

General Erle.
Lieut. Genl. Seymour.[1]
Maj. Genl. Gorges.[2]
Sir George Byng.
Lord Dursley.

All the Forces being embarked that we can take in the Men of War and Transports, and a Consultation of the Pilots sent from Guernsey and Jersey, as well as those that were in the Fleet having been held, it appears by the said Pilots' report from under their hands, that they are not well acquainted with the Coast of France to the Eastward of Dieppe but conceive there is very great difficulty to find a convenient road for the Fleet and Transports to anchor near the river Somme and the Etaples so as to cover the landing of the Army, and more difficulty to find a place

[1] Lieut.-General, 1707. [2] Lieut.-General, 1710.

to land the Army with a Westerly wind, the sea falling wholly on the shore, and a great surf thereon, that they think it impracticable but with Easterly Winds. All along from Boulogne to the Etaples, and between Caen and Bourg d'Authie they conceive men may land, but they refuse to take charge to carry the Fleet near the shore so as to cover the army's landing, and likewise say that the ships that sail out of the River Somme or St. Valery usually take pilots at Dieppe or Tréport to carry them within the Sands that lie off that river.

Upon serious consideration held thereon, that if there be a possibility of landing the Army on the West side of the River Somme (on which St. Valery lies, up the said river) it seems impracticable to get over that river to possess ourselves of Abbeville, having no Pontoons nor any other materials to facilitate our passage over the river, it being reasonable to think the Enemy will take the measures by breaking down the Bridges, etc., to prevent our passage, but if there be a possibility to land on the East side of the River Somme, which is the side that Abbeville lies on, and on which side of the river it is most likely to join any Forces the Duke of Marlborough may send to our assistance for the better and more effectual execution of the said enterprise, we resolve to attempt it, if there be a possibility of landing.

But the Land Generals desire it may be considered withal, that if the Ordnance Storeships shall not be able to join them near the time of landing they shall be destitute of Pick-axes, Shovels and other Materials and Stores that will be absolutely necessary for such an undertaking, and the distance the Army is like to be from the Fleet considering the situation of the Coast, and diffi-

culties started [*sic*] by the Pilots, it will be very uncertain how they shall be subsisted ; but however we resolve, so soon as the Weather gives leave (which since the Troops have been embarked, still continues to blow hard at S.W. which will render the Transports anchoring on the Enemy's Coast very dangerous) to proceed in pursuance of our Instructions to attempt what may be done.

Copy.

G. BYNG.

FROM LORD SUNDERLAND

Windsor. July 25th 1708.

Sir,—I had the favour of yours yesterday, and am glad the troops are embark'd ; I have enclos'd to Lieutenant General Erle, a Copy of a very fresh letter from the Camp in Flanders, which gives good hopes of your being supported in Picardy ; I am now Commanded by the Queen to acquaint you, that you are empower'd, as soon as you have landed the troops, in case you and Lieut. Gen. Erle shall think it necessary, to send transports, not only to Ireland for the two regiments there, but also to Scotland, for the regiments of foot of My Lord Strathnaven and Colonel Grant you will have orders to be in readiness to embark. I have nothing more to trouble you with but to wish you good success, and assure you that I am with great truth and esteem

Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

SUNDERLAND.

Endorsed : Received by Express
the 26th at noon.

FROM LORD SUNDERLAND

Windsor. July 26, 1708.
11 in the morning.

Sir,—I receiv'd yours and L. G. Erle's of yesterday by express this morning, together with your letter to Lord Treasurer, both which we have laid before the Queen, who does entirely approve of your opinion, and would have you immediately without loss of time, repair with the fleet and forces on board to the Downs, where you will join the Store ships, and all the other Transports, and from thence with the first wind, be in a readiness to repair to the river Somme ; you will receive by this express the Prince's orders to this effect ; I don't write in particular to Lieut. Gen. Erle, because this is to him and you, you will acquaint him that the Dragoons are to continue under the same orders for their marching to Dover, which I sent him by express last night ; as soon as you arrive in the Downs, which I hope with this wind may be in 24 hours, you will send an express to acquaint us with your arrival there ; I beg pardon for this hasty scrawl and am yours and Lieut. General Erle's

Most obedient humble servant,
SUNDERLAND.

Ld. Treasurer having a great deal to do at the Treasury this morning hopes you will excuse his not writing. He is entirely of your opinion. I am just now going for London.

Endorsed : Received the 27th at 2 in the morning.

ENCLOSURE.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Whereas by a Letter received from you this morning by Express, you have proposed that the Ships of War under your Command and the Transports at Spithead may come to the Downs and join those Transports which are there, in regard you shall not be able to proceed on the intended Expedition so long as the Wind continues Westerly, and that the Ships of War and Transports now with you are very much pestered ; I do therefore (in pursuance of her Majesty's Pleasure) hereby direct and require you, to repair forthwith to the Downs, with all the Ships of War and Transports at Spithead, designed for the present Expedition, where you are to join the other Transports, and from thence proceed according to such Orders as you have received.

Dated at Windsor this 26th of July 1708.

GEORGE.

FROM LORD SUNDERLAND

Whitehall. July 28th, 1708.
Wednesday noon.

Sir,—I have the favour of yours of yesterday, dated under sail at Spithead ; I hope by this time you are in the Downs, where, when you are arrived, it is her Majesty's pleasure, that you don't stay for any of the other Troops, but take the Store ships along with you, and make the best of your way to the river Somme, that you may have landed your troops by the time appointed for My Ld. Marlborough's detachment to meet them ;

the Dragoons will be ship'd off as soon as they arrive to follow you ; but the main thing is if possible not to fail the time appointed, with the troops you have ready embarked with you ; What you propose in relation to the bringing the four or five hundred men after you will be order'd accordingly. I am with great truth,

Sir,

Your most faithful humble servant,

SUNDERLAND.

You will leave a man of war or two
or what you shall judge necessary to
Convoy the Dragoons etc. after you,
to the river Somme.

Endorsed : Received 30th.

OPINION OF THE PILOTS

The Opinion of the Pilots of Rye, Dover and Deal, concerning the landing of Forces between Blanc Nez and Dieppe [29 July 1708].

From [Cape] Blanc Nez to Boulogne with the Wind from the N.N.E. to the S.W. by S. we are of Opinion the Men of War may ride within two Miles of the Shore, and the Transports within a Mile, that there the army may land with Security with those Winds.

From the Point to the Southward of Boulogne, called Portel, to the Etaples with the Wind from N.N.E. Eastward to the S.S.E. the shore is reasonable for Men to land on, and the Transports may come within a Mile of the Shore, and the Men of War within two Miles of them, but without

Winds there is no road or Security for Ships or Boats on that shore.

From the Etaples to St. Valery and to Tréport it is very flat a great way off shore, and no coming nearer the land with the Ships than four or five Leagues, by reason of the sands and shoals that lie so far out, nor landing men anywhere between the Etaples and Tréport, not even with an Easterly wind, the shoals lying very far out, and we do utterly refuse to take charge to carry the Fleet and Transports within those sands.

From Tréport to Dieppe in our Opinion there is no landing of an Army, because the shore and cliffs are so very steep on that Coast.

Robart Moore.	Henry Seall.
Rich. Weale.	⊢⊢⊢ the mark of
Cornelius Smith.	James Gravenor.
Henry Rurst	John Smith.
Salin [*name illegible*].	John Porvell.
Thomas Hoskins.	Thomas Joyner.

COUNCIL OF WAR

At a Council of War held on bd. the Humber in the Downs 29th July 1708.

PRESENT.

General Erle.	Sir George Byng Adml. of the Blue.
Lieut. Genl. Seymour.	
Maj. Genl. Gorges.	Lord Dursley Vice Adml. of the Blue.

Upon our arrival here we held a Council of War, in which the Opinion of all the Pilots from Rye, Dover and Deal were [*sic*] asked concerning the landing the Army at or near the River Somme, as the annexed Accounts do set forth.

They have been jointly and severally asked, and do affirm there is no carrying the Fleet and Transports near that Shore, by reason of the shoals and flats that lie so far out, nor landing men anywhere between the Etaples and Tréport, not even with an Easterly Wind, the shoals lying four or five Leagues off, and do utterly refuse to take charge to carry the Fleet and Transports within those sands, so that we do not see any probability of executing the Orders we are at present under.

We do resolve however to shift the Troops into the Transports that lie in the Downs both for conveniency and preservation of the men's health, and make such dispositions for putting ourselves in a condition to proceed on any Service where it is possible to effect any Commands we shall receive.

And so soon as Winds and Weather will permit, do farther resolve to proceed with the Fleet and Transports over to Boulogne bay, to lie ready there in expectation of her Majesty's farther Commands, and while we are there, endeavour to gain what Intelligence we can of any detachment of the Duke of Marlborough's Army, should they come down near that coast, in order to join them if possible.

Copy.

G. Byng.

FROM LORD SUNDERLAND

Whitehall. July 30th, 1708.

Sir,—I received yours from the Downs, late last night; I have nothing to add to what I writ

last, but that I believe it would be right, when you sail, for you to leave the sealed up directions to the Commander of the convoy you leave for the Dragoons, where they should follow you ; I wish you good success and am always

Sir, Your most obedient
humble servant,
SUNDERLAND.

My humble service to
Lieut. Gen. Erle.

Endorsed : Received 30th.

FROM HENRY BOYLE

Windsor. July 31, 1708.

Sir,—In the absence of my Lord Sunderland, I am to acquaint you that your letter of of [*sic*] the 29th of July with the opinion of a Council of War of the same date, held on board the Humber in the Downs, having been laid before the Queen, Her Majesty does approve of your resolution to proceed with the Fleet and Transports over to Boulogne Bay, where you will receive her Majesty's further orders, as soon as she hears from the Duke of Marlborough and knows what measures he has taken in relation to the intended descent.

I am very truly,
Sir, your most faithful humble servant,
H. BOYLE.

Endorsed : Received 4th August.

COUNCIL OF WAR

At a Council of War held on board her Maj. Ship Bedford the 2nd August 1708.

PRESENT.

L. Genl. Erle.
L. Genl. Seymour.
Maj. Gen. Gorges.
Brigad. Wynne.[1]
Brigad. Hamilton.
Col. Townshend.

Sir Geo. Byng Adml. Blue.
Ld. Dursley Vice Adml. Blue.

That being in Boulogne Bay in order to stay there to receive her Maj. further Instructions, upon the advice we had received from his Grace the Duke of Marlborough to desist from the project of St. Valery but rather advises to pursue our former Instructions for disturbing and annoying the Enemy's coasts, and conceiving by those Instructions there is a latitude given to do the same where we judge it most feasible.

By what observations we can make of the shore we lie off of now, think it not so guarded but that we may reasonably land a detachment of her Maj. Troops from the fleet and endeavour to burn the neighbouring Villages, which may put the country in some consternation; it is resolved to land a detachment to morrow by break of day and endeavour to effect the said service.

THO. ERLE.
WILL. SEYMOUR.
RIS. [*sic*] GORGES.
OWEN WYNNE.
HANS HAMILTON.
R. TOWNSEND.

G. BYNG.
DURSLEY.

[1] Lieut.-General, 1727.

COUNCIL OF WAR

At a Council of War held on bd. the Triumph off the Etaples 4th August 1708.

PRESENT.

General Erle.
Lieutent.Genl. Seymour.
Maj. Genl. Gorges.
Brigadier Wynne.
Brigadier Livesay.[1]

Sir George Byng Adml. of the Blue.
Lord Dursley Vice Adml. of the Blue.

The Council of War considering the Instructions her Majesty is pleased to direct for the annoying and disturbing the Enemy on the coast of France, it is thought reasonable that such a detachment as shall be thought necessary, be immediately landed on the shore opposite to the Fleet which is to the Southward of the Etaples, and is thought by the Flags of the Fleet a reasonable place as the Winds and Weather are, to land men on ; and they do resolve to lie at an Anchor here with the Fleet until all the Troops are re-embarked again, and will give all assistance to the Army in re-embarking, and timely notice if they shall foresee any weather that may obstruct their safe re-embarking again.

It is resolved by the Land Generals that a detachment only go ashore, because it is thought impossible to take Post in this part of France, since the Duke of Marlborough has advised that he cannot join us with any Troops.

It is left to the Brigadier that commands the

[1] John Livesay, Major-General, 1710.

Detachment, to judge whether he can land, and if he does land, how far to advance, and when to make his retreat.

THO. ERLE.
WILL. SEYMOUR.
RIS. GORGES.
J. LIVESAY.
G. BYNG.
DURSLEY.

COUNCIL OF WAR

At a Council of War held on board the Humber the 5th August 1708.

PRESENT.

General Erle.
Lt. Gen. Seymour.
Maj. Genl. Gorges.
Brigad. Wynne.
Brigad. Livesay.
Sir George Byng Adml. of the Blue.
Lord Dursley Vice Admiral of the Blue.

My Lord Treasurer's Letter of the 2nd and Mr. Secretary Boyle's of the 3rd instant signifying Her Majesty's pleasure that we do not land the Troops in Picardy but remain in Boulogne Bay till the tides lift to embark the Dragoons at Dover which are ordered to join us, and after that is done It is Her Majesty's Pleasure that We pursue our first Instructions of acting upon the Coast of Normandy and Brittany until we shall receive further Orders. And whereas Her Majesty would have us inform ourselves before we leave the Coast of Boulogne by all means we can of the best and most convenient places of landing at or near St. Valery, in case (as the Duke of Marlborough thinks in his Letter) a more convenient opportunity shall offer for it.

In order to this Sir George Byng has sent a snow with Pilots into the River of St. Valery to sound that Coast between that and Tréport, and has sent likewise the Dover to meet the said vessel off Tréport and to make the best observations that ship can of the said coast, after which to join the fleet off of Boulogne, where we resolve to go in expectation of the Dragoons joining us from Dover, after which we will pursue our first Instructions as Her Maj. has been pleased to direct.

THO. ERLE.
WILL. SEYMOUR.
RIS. GORGES.
OWEN WYNNE.
J. LIVESAY.
G. BYNG.
DURSLEY.

COUNCIL OF WAR

At a Council of War held on board the Humber in Dover Road the 8th August 1708.

PRESENT.

General Erle.
Lieut. Genl. Seymour.
Major Genl. Gorges.
Sir Geo. Byng Adml. of the Blue.
Lord Dursley Vice Adml. of the Blue.

Being yesterday in Boulogne Bay the Winds coming fresh at North West and a great Swell falling in, it was thought not a safe road for the Fleet and Transports to lie there, especially since nothing was to be effected on that Coast, but rather to work over to Dover Road to join the Transports with the Dragoons and the foot that lately came from the Isle of Wight.

Coming this evening off of Dover and finding all the Dragoons shipp'd off but about Fifty Horse; considering Her Majesty's Commands signified by My Lord Treasurer's and Mr. Boyle's Letters of the 2nd and 3rd instant, which directs Genl. Erle not to Land the Troops in Picardy but so soon as joined by the Dragoons to proceed in pursuance of our former Instructions to annoy the Enemy on the Coast of Normandy or Brittany.

Resolved to leave a frigate to bring after us the ship with the Dragoons that is to come out of Dover Pier this night, and with the rest of the Fleet and Transports to make the best of our way on the Coast of Normandy, if the Wind continues North Easterly to anchor with the Fleet in the Bay of Grandance [Granville ?], but if the Wind shall prove Westerly to anchor with the Fleet in La Hogue Bay, in one of those places to land the Troops, if there be any probability of effecting the service directed by Her Majesty's Instructions.

THO. ERLE. G. BYNG.
WILL. SEYMOUR. DURSLEY.
RIS. GORGES.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

In pursuance of her Maj. pleasure signified last night in Cabinet Council; You are hereby required and directed, to give Orders to the Lord Dursley, forthwith to proceed with her Maj. ships named in the margin [1] hereof, into the Soundings, and that

[1] Orford
Salisbury
August
Dover
Worcester
Exeter
Plymouth

he Cruises with them between the Latitudes of 48 and 50 Degrees Westing from Scilly, between Forty and Fifty leagues for the Security of the Trades expected from Jamaica, Barbadoes and the Leeward Islands, Virginia and Lisbon, and the Merchant Ships from India and their Convoys, coming from Galway in Ireland ; and you are to direct his Lordship, that in case he meets with any of the said Trade, he does take particular care they be seen within the Land, and to give Orders to the Captains of the ships he appoints on the said service to return to him so soon as they have performed it.

Duplicate.

You are to order him in his passage into the Soundings, to call at Plymouth, where her Maj. Ship the Plymouth is, and that since she is in want of some men, he endeavours to man her out of the Ships of his Squadron, and to carry her to sea with him, but that if he cannot do it, he orders her to follow him as soon as possibly may be.

And since the Hampshire, Chatham and Sunderland are designed to be part of the Squadron under his Command in the Soundings, you are to direct his Lordship to leave Orders at Plymouth (with his Rendezvous) for their joining him, to which place they will be directed to call for the same. And in case the said Ships Chatham and Hampshire shall join you after the Lord Dursley is sailed, pursuant to these my Orders, or any other of the Ships hereby designed to be under his Command, you are to Order their Captains forthwith to proceed to Plymouth, and from thence to him in the Soundings, according to such Rendezvous as he shall there leave for them. You are further to direct his Lordship to take particular care in looking out for the homeward bound Trades expected from Lisbon, Jamaica, Barbadoes,

the Leeward Islands and Virginia, and the Merchant Ships from India and their Convoys from Ireland, and to cruise for their security till further Orders, and that he sends a ship to Plymouth once in ten or twelve days, with an account of his Proceedings, and for further directions.

Having thus detached from you the aforementioned ships with the Lord Dursley, you are with these others mentioned in the margin [1] hereof, and such others as may be appointed to join you, to put in Execution such Orders as you have received.

Given under my hand this Ninth Day of August 1708 at Windsor.

GEORGE.

Endorsed :—Received by the Dover the 15th.

FROM HENRY BOYLE

Whitehall. 11th Aug. 1708.

Sir,—Since I writ you yesterday [2] and sent you a letter enclosed from My Lord Treasurer, I have laid before the Lords of the Committee what General Erle mentions in his Letter of the 8th about the Soldiers beginning to fall sick on board, and that there will be occasion for an Hospital Ship for them ; and I am to acquaint you thereupon that their Ldps. are of opinion that an Hospital Ship

[1]
Triumph	Pembroke
Ipswich	Mary
Suffolk	Antelope
Humber	Ludlow Castle
Boyne	The Fireships
Royal Oak	Bomb Vessels
Bedford	etc., etc.

[2] Boyle's letter of 10th August merely acknowledged the receipt of Byng's Council of War of the 8th and stated that he had laid it before the Lord Treasurer.

cannot conveniently be provided and sent to the Fleet to be of use to the men as the present occasion may require, and therefore think it proper for the Service that you should accommodate them with some Tenders or other small Vessels to be made use of for the sick men, till better provision can be made: for notwithstanding what I have writ to you, if it is practicable to find an Hospital Ship, as desired, all due care will be taken to have it done. I am,

Sir,

Your most faithful humble servant,

H. Boyle.

COUNCIL OF WAR

At a Council of War held on board the Ludlow Castle in La Hogue Bay near the shore 12th Aug. 1708.

PRESENT.

General Erle.
Lieut. Genl. Seymour.
Maj. Genl. Gorges.
Brig. Wynne.
Brig. Livesay.

Upon the Report of Engineer Hanway and Quarter Master Genl. La Colombiere (who were sent yesterday in the evening after we came into the Bay of La Hogue, to discover the shore) that there was a place proper for landing Men where they then saw no Troops to oppose it. Whereupon a disposition was made for the landing twelve hundred Foot to be followed by the rest as fast as the boats could fetch them from the Transports where they lay; but upon our coming near the shore this morning where the Boats rendezvous'd

we saw (as near as we could guess) a body of about three thousand Foot under arms with some Horse regularly drawn up and small forts on their right, left and in the centre at no great distance from the landing place ; Upon which the Opinions of the Land Officers were asked, whether they thought it would be for her Majesty's Service to land the detachment, who were unanimous to the Contrary for the following reasons, Vizt. that the Boats of the Fleet not being capable of landing above twelve hundred men at a time and that it would be two hours before they could be sustained by the like number and consequently it would be at least six hours before the whole could be brought to join them. Upon these considerations they were of Opinion that they should not hazard the first Detachment who in all probability could not have maintained their ground so considerable a time against such an irregularity of numbers, which in all likelihood, would have increased, wherefore they thought it advisable to re-embark the detachment, rather than expose them, not having a prospect of gaining any considerable advantage by it.

THO. ERLE.
WILL. SEYMOUR.
RIS. GORGES.
OWEN WYNNE.
J. LIVESAY.

FROM LORD GODOLPHIN

Windsor. 10th Aug. 1708.

Sir,—I have the favour of yours off of Dover with the notice of your intending to proceed from thence to the Coast of Normandy in pursuance of your first instructions, which is all that can be done till the D. of Marlborough finding himself in

better Circumstances to sustain you; in the meantime you have, I think, the satisfaction of finding you could have performed your part, as it was designed in the Expedition to St. Valery.

There being certain news of Du Guay being sailed from Brest with 10 or 12 men of war to the westward, it is thought necessary for the security of the homeward bound Trade to send My Lord Dursley with a part of your Squadron into the Soundings, leaving a sufficient number to protect the Service you are now upon, and for the Convoy of the Queen of Portugal, when it shall be over; the last letter said she was arrived at Rotterdam, but as the winds have been since, I believe Mr. Baker has not yet been able to get over, to fetch her to Spithead. When she shall arrive there, I reckon she must have the patience to expect the event of the Siege of Lille, and what the D. of Marlborough may propose after it, before you can be at liberty to attend her Maj. to Lisbon. Give me leave to repeat my assurances to you of being always very sincerely,

Sir,

Your most faithful humble servant,

GODOLPHIN.

Endorsed: Received by the Dover the 15th.

FROM JAMES CHILDRESS

Rt. Honourable,—These are humbly to acquaint you that on the 13th of this instant Capt. Passenger being out of the ship, Lieut. Fairley sent for me on the Quarter Deck and asked me the reason why I made it my business to report on board the Suffolk, that he quitted his post in time of service and went down to the Cockpit

and told the Doctor he was Mortally wounded, and Cried out, 'Oh what shall my poor wife and children do.' 'Yes, Sir,' said I, 'I did say so, and it is matter of fact: and the Doctor hath Declared it before substantial witness, that you had no more wound or appearance of a wound than was to be seen on the back of his hand:' and he the said Doctor did profer to take his oath before the superintendant of the same. Moreover he the said Mr. Fairley confined himself in the Doctor's Cabin for about 12 or 14 hours, and the next morning none was more brisk than he.—And thus to be abused by one, who called me good for nothing: old rogue: and old dog, bidding me hold my Damned tongue, for I made such another noise as that old chattering bitch, my wife did, and pushed and shufed [*sic*] me off the Quarter Deck, and bid me go to my Cabin or he would knock my brains out, so being much grieved to hear my wife and self abused by my officer, for answering to the truth when asked by him, besides he hinders me in the discharge of my duty, so I humbly desire your hono. favour to do me justice and make me easy.

Surgeon has denied it upon Oath.

Rt. honourable I am in all humility
your honour's Dutiful
and obedient servant,
JAM. CHILDRESS.

her Majesty's ship Royal Oak
August the 16th, 1708.

FROM LIEUTENANT FAIRLEY

Honourable Sir,—Whereas James Childress present master of the Royal Oak whereof I am Second Lieut. has at several times and places Maliciously endeavoured to ruin my Character

by branding me with the infamous scandal of Cowardice in the engagement we had with the enemy the 10 of October Last off Scilly, I do hereby humbly pray your Honor Will please to procure my Trial by which I doubt not but to clear myself of so foul a stain, and also I shall have the pleasure, of seeing a villain justly punished, by men of Honor: Sir 't'is with great Regret that I find myself obliged to give your Honour this trouble, at such a juncture, but the affair being of such a Consequence to me Gives me hopes you'll please to pardon,

Honorable Sir,
your most humble and
most obedient servant,
G. FAIRLIE [*sic*].

Royal Oak.
off Cherbourg
August the 17, 1708.

COURT MARTIAL

At a Court Martial held on board her Maj. Ship the Triumph in La Hogue Bay 24th Aug. 1708.

PRESENT.

Sir George Byng Admiral of the Blue. President.

Cap. Tho. Stepney.	Cap. Thos. Smith.
Cap. Wm. Cleaveland.	Cap. Edw. Rumsey.
Cap. Vincent Cutter.	Cap. Chas. Fotherby.
Cap. Wm. Passenger.	Cap. Barth. Candler.

All duly sworn pursuant to a late Act of Parliament etc.

Enquiry was made by the Court into the grounds of the Complaint of James Childress Master of the Royal Oak, against Mr. George

Fairley for striking, and abusing him with injurious Language; as also the Complaint of the said Lieut. Fairley against the Master for aspersing him in the Fleet with cowardice; After a serious examination of the evidences produced on both sides, the Court is of opinion, that the said Master has not proved any of his allegations, and does acquit the said Lieut. of the Charge against him; but it appears fully to the Court, that Lieut. Fairley has been maliciously and scandalously abused by the Master, and unjustly reproached with Cowardice, which he has fully cleared himself from: upon which the Court does adjudge the Master to fall under the 23rd Article made in the 13th year of K. Ch. 2nd, and the Court does accordingly dismiss the said James Childress from his Employment of Master of her Majesty's ship Royal Oak.

G. Byng. Tho. Smith.
C. W. Stepney. E. Rumsey.
Wm. Cleaveland. Charles Fotherby.
Vin. Cutter. Barth. Candler.
W. Passenger.

FROM HENRY BOYLE

Whitehall. Aug. 19th 1708.

Sir,—I have the favour of yours of 17th instant from the Bay of la Hogue which has been laid before the Queen, and likewise the letter you writ to my Lord Treasurer of the same date. I am commanded by her Majesty to signify Her Pleasure that you continue to alarm and annoy the Enemy upon the Coast of France pursuant to your Instructions, till further Orders; but in

case of bad weather, or that the men grow sickly, you may return to the Downs, or any other Station upon our Coast that you shall judge most proper, I am,

Sir,

Your most faithful humble servant,

H. BOYLE.

Endorsed : Received by the Antelope the 26th.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

You are hereby required and directed to Order the Queen of Portugal's Bed to be received on board one of the Ships of the Squadron under your Command, which you shall think fit to send ahead of the Fleet, to give advice of your coming to Lisbon ; giving directions to the Captain to land the said Bed so soon as he arrives there. Given under my hand this 20 August 1708.

GEORGE.

FROM HENRY BOYLE

Windsor. Aug. 30 1708.

Sir,—I received yesterday the favour of your letter of the 28th instant from St. Helens, which I have had the honour to lay before the Queen, and Her Majesty approves of your returning to the Coast of England with the Fleet under your Command for the reasons you have given, but does not think fit to send you any new Orders for sailing, 'til she has heard again from the Duke of Marlborough ; in the meantime it is expected

that you should provide the Fleet with everything that is necessary to put again to Sea as soon as her Majesty shall think it proper to send you directions to that purpose. I am with great Esteem,

Sir,

Your most faithful humble servant,

H. BOYLE.

Endorsed: Received by the Messenger the 31st at noon.

FROM HENRY BOYLE

Windsor. Aug. 31, 1708.

Sir,—I send you by the Queen's Order an Extract out of Mr. Macky's [1] letter, that you may please to consider, and give your opinion whether it be practicable or advisable to attempt with the Fleet to destroy the ships come from the Havana under the Command of Mons. du Casse, that are now in the Harbour of Passages;[2] it is not said when they arrived in that Port, but this being the first news of it, it must be very lately. I am sincerely,

Sir,

Your most faithful humble servant,

H. BOYLE.

[1] Possibly John Macky, the Government spy. He specialised in obtaining knowledge of intended invasions of England, and during 1708 was in charge of the Dover packet-boat service to Flanders. He was soon afterwards imprisoned, but was released on George I's accession, and died in 1726.

[2] The harbour of Pasajes lies just to the east of S. Sebastian.

COUNCIL OF WAR

At a consultation with the Captains of Her Maj. ships at Spithead and Portsmouth Harbour By Sir George Byng. The first of Sept. 1708.

Her Maj. Orders signified by Mr. Secretary Boyle by his Letter of yesterday's date, with advice of Mons du Casse's Arrival with the Fleet from the Havana in the Harbour of Passage, our Opinion being desired whether it be practicable or advisable to attempt with the Fleet the destroying the aforesaid ships of the Enemy's in the said Harbour of Passage ; Humbly offer our Opinion that upon the best enquiry that could be made through the Fleet at Spithead and in harbour amongst the French Pilots we have on board, the Lieutenants, Masters, and Inferior Officers, of the Nature of that Harbour and Coasts adjoining, We cannot find any acquainted therewith, but the said Lieut. of the Mary, who was there some years Since, and he reports the entrance of the Harbour to be about a Quarter of a Mile Broad. On the Starboard Side going in is rocky foul ground, and on the Larboard Side within the head there Lies a fortification which he thinks is strong, as there is another fortification on the starboard side further up the Harbour where the ships lie, that there is no turning in, but you must have a fair Wind to go into the Harbour, that with the Winds out, there falls in a very heavy Sea, and no anchoring without the head for the Great Depth of Water.

If the place be as it is thus Represented, We are of Opinion it is with very great difficulty the Fleet will be able to get into that Harbour in such a manner as to be Able to attack the Enemy's

Fleet, should they take reasonable measures to prevent our Fleet's attempting them.

But as to our Advising to attempt with the Fleet Destroying the Enemy's Ships in that Harbour, pray leave only to assure her Maj. that on what Service Soever She will Please to Command us, we will Endeavour to do our Duty in such a Manner as becomes her Servants.

REPORT OF THE FIRST LIEUTENANT OF THE MARY CONCERNING THE HARBOUR OF PASSAGE

In March 1708 I went to St. Sebastian, and from thence I went by land to Passage where I hired a Boat and went down to the harbour's mouth, and found it to be (as near as I could guess) about a Quarter of a Mile broad, a large fortification fronting the mouth or entrance of the river on the Larboard side ; a great many rocks both above and under water on the Starbd. side : The town about two miles from the mouth of the river lies upon a Point of Land on the West side of the river, it having a small Fort close to the Water side ; the harbour is deep, and a moderate tide goes into it, and when you are in, as capable of receiving a considerable Quantity of ships : You must have a leading wind to go in, but if it happens that you cannot go in (as it very often happens) with a fair wind, if it overblows and the sea be great, you cannot anchor any ways upon the Coast, by reason (as I was credibly informed by the Inhabitant) there is a hundred fathom Water in less than a Quarter of a Mile from the Shore.

WM. FERNLEY.

Copy.

1st Septem. 1708.

FROM LORD SUNDERLAND

Windsor. Sunday night Sept. the 5th 1708.

Sir,—I send you this messenger, by her Maj. order to signify her Pleasure to you that you immediately sail with the fleet under your Command and the forces on board, (except the dragoons which are to be relanded) to Ostend, and there land the said forces, who are to assist at the reduction of Bruges and Gand [Ghent], and who will there meet with orders from My Lord Marlborough, and as soon as you have seen the said forces, safe in the port of Ostend, you are to return to Portsmouth, there to stay for the Queen of Portugal, and considering how the wind stands, you will probably be back there, before her; I return'd last night from the Country so that our Correspondence will now begin again; I am always with great truth, and esteem,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

SUNDERLAND.

Endorsed: Received by a messenger the 6th at 12 at noon.

FROM LORD SUNDERLAND

Whitehall. Sept. 8th 1708.

Sir,—I had the favour of yours yesterday, and have nothing further to trouble you with but to acquaint you, that in case you should meet Rear Admiral Baker in your way to Ostend, it is her Maj. pleasure, that you should send him and his Squadron, with the troops to Ostend, and that

you should immediately take the Queen of Portugal under your care, to bring her to Portsmouth. I wish you a good voyage, and am with great truth,

Sir, your most faithfull humble servant,

SUNDERLAND.

Endorsed : Received by express the 9th in the morning.

OPINION OF THE PILOTS

Sir George Byng proposing to us, and asking our Advice whether it were advisable for the ships mentioned in the Margin [1] to go over to Ostend to convoy the Troops thither ; It is our Opinion, that these ships draw too much Water, and the Season of the Year is too late : that the outermost Bank which lies five or six Leagues out from the Land has not above fourteen foot of Water upon it at low Water, and that no ship exceeding the fourth rate fifty Gun'd Ships are proper to go into Ostend Road at this Season of the Year.

RICH. WEALE.
THOMAS HAYGET.
HEN. PASCALLS.
GEORGE BARBER.
THOMAS JOYNER.
CONRAD SMITH.

Humber in the Downs
Septem. 9th 1708.

[1] Humber
Boyne
Royal Oak
Bedford
Resolution.

PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK TO CAPTAIN MIGHELLS

Whereas I am informed by your Letter of yesterday's date, that seven of the Enemy's ships got out of Dunkirk the 6th inst. and put to the Northward with all the sail they could make, upon which you are returned to the Downs with the Squadron under your Command; and it being absolutely necessary that one moment's time should not be lost in your getting to sea for the security of the several Trades daily expected from the Northward. You are therefore hereby Required and Directed to take under your Command the several ships named in the Margin [1] (the respective Commanders whereof are hereby Required to obey your Orders) and get them victuall'd to ten Weeks each if it can be done, but if you find any stop in getting so much, you are to complete their Victualling to two months, or get aboard what you can be supplied with, without loss of time, and then immediately to sail and cruise with the ships under your Command upon the Dogger Bank in the fair way of the Trade for the security and protection thereof, on which service you are to continue Cruising as long as your Provisions will hold out, or 'till farther Order, and therefore you are to put the ships' Companies to short Allowance of Provisions for the lengthening out the same, when you find it necessary.

In case the Sunderland shall not join you before you sail from the Downs, you are not to

[1] Dreadnought
Resolution
Sunderland
Newcastle
St. Albans
Salisbury Prize
Falkland
Greyhound
Tartar
Burchett Sloop.

stay for her, but leave Orders there for her Commander to follow and join you on the Dogger Bank.

And whereas I have ordered the Dragon and Rye to join you on the Dogger Bank, you are upon their coming to you, to order the Commander of the Sunderland to make the best of his way to the Downs, and if he meets no Orders there to the contrary, then to repair to Spithead, and continue there 'till farther Order, directing him to Convoy thither the Trade in the Downs bound his way, which shall be ready to sail with him.

You are upon your receipt hereof to Order the Commander of the Experiment (who is hereby required to obey your Orders) to make the best of his way with her to Harwich, where she is to be Clean'd and Refitted according to the Orders which I have given on that behalf, directing him to hasten the doing thereof all that possibly he can, and to remain there 'till farther Orders.

And whereas you have given me an account that several of your ship's Company are sick, I have thereupon ordered her to be supplied with twenty able seamen from the Warspight, to whose Commander you are to apply for them. And as you are to be very diligent in the execution of these my Orders, so are you to send me account of your Proceedings to my Secretary for my Information by all opportunities which shall present. Given under my hand this 8th Sept. 1708.

GEORGE.

To Capt. Mighells Commander of
the Dreadnought in the Downs.

Endorsed : Received 9th Sept. at
10 at night.

FROM JOHN FAWLER

Admiralty Office. 9 Septem. 1708.

Sir,—In the absence of the Secretary, this comes to own the receipt of your Letter to him of this day's date which has been laid before the Council to his Royal Highness, and I am Commanded by them to send this to you by Express to acquaint you in answer thereto, that they do agree with you in your Proposal for some of the Ships in the Downs to be sent to Ostend in the room of others, if the Service could admit thereof; But the Enemy's Squadron at Dunkirk being got out, and gone to the Northward, and by a Letter received this day from Captain Desborough of the Fubbs Yacht, who was going to Holland with the Trade from Harwich under Convoy of the Norwich and Flamborough, it appears that those two Men of War were chased by them the 6th instant, and t'is not yet known whether they have fallen into their hands or not, a Copy of which Letter from Captain Desborough comes enclosed for your particular information therein: Besides 'tis reckoned the Dunkirk Squadron are gone Northward upon the intelligence they may have received of the arrival at Leith of a Fleet from Virginia of Forty Sail as well as to intercept the Trade daily expected from the East Country under Convoy of the Anglesea and Nonsuch only, and therefore his Royal Highness has ordered the Squadron which were before Dunkirk to proceed immediately to sea to secure the return of the Northern Trades, and afterwards to Cruise on the Dogger Bank; and I doubt not, but Capt. Mighells has 'ere this informed you of the Orders he has received from the Prince to secure the

Trades aforesaid, which is the reason that none of the ships appointed to go with him can be employed as you have Proposed. I am,

Sir,

Your most humble Servant,

J. FAWLER.

Endorsed: Received 10th at 7 in the morning.

ENCLOSURE.

CAPTAIN DESBOROUGH'S LETTER

Harwich the 8th September 1708.

[Copy.]

On Monday last I sailed in Company of the Norwich and Flamborough and about 40 Sail of Merchant Ships: about 3 in the afternoon the Wind Southerly, about 6 Leagues from Orfordness, we saw 5 Sail in the E.S.E. of us; we kept our Course and the 5 ships stood for us, we made them to be large ships. One had a Blue Flag or broad Pendant at his Main top Gallant Mast head, but we could not tell which it was, because it hung down on the back of the Topgallant Sail, I went on board the Norwich, and Capt. Spann believed them to be Enemies. He made a Signal for the Convoys to come under his stern, and order'd them to stand into the shore, and desired me to do so too, that if they proved to be friends, he would hoist a Union Flag at the Mizen Peak and fire a Gun, if Enemies I should see by what they did, Capt. Spann stood to them, and as I suppose making them to be Enemies, bore away to the Northward, and when it grew almost dark stood in after the Merchant Ships, but night

coming on with violent thunder lightning and rain with a gust of wind, separated us one from the other. I lay by till the storm was over, and then made sail for the Ness, as did most of the Merchant Ships, and when the tide of flood was done, I anchor'd under the Ness. On Tuesday morning as soon as it was light we saw all the Merchant Ships anchor'd about us, but some at a good distance, the Norwich, Flamborough and the other ships at anchor in the North East of us as far as we could discern them on our Deck, but the five ships were to the Eastward of the others. As soon as it was flood I weigh'd and stood as low as Aldborough and saw the mall under sail, the Flamborough went away with her Main Sail up and Top Gallant sails furled, but the Norwich had all the Sail she could make, and seemed to me to stand to Yarmouth Roads, the other 5 ships giving them Chase. I believe the least of them had 30 Guns or upward. I was in the main Top above an hour looking on them, but did not perceive they came up with them, but seeing a Fleet of Colliers coming about the Ness with 2 Men of war made sail to them and gave the Captains account of them, who immediately made all the sail they could to them. I was told by a Boat from Aldborough that for 3 or 4 days 5 Sail of Ships were seen that stood in once a day and then off again but since have heard nothing more of the Norwich and Flamborough, but hope they are safe. The Wind being to the Westward of the South I turn'd into Oazely Bay, and this morning came into the rowling Grounds, as did all the Merchant Ships, I thought it my duty to give you this account.

PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK TO CAPTAIN MIGHELLS

Whereas I have recd. a Letter from Captain Desborough Commander of the Fubbs Yacht, dated at Harwich the 8th inst., giving an Account that on the 6th the Norwich and Flamborough were chased by five of the Enemy's ships, as you will be more particularly informed by the enclosed Copy of the said Captain's Letter, and whereas it is of the greatest importance to the Service that the Coast should be cleared of the Enemy's Ships, and the Trades coming from the Northward protected; And there being a Fleet of Merchant Ships lately arrived from Virginia, and now at Leith or New Castle under Convoy of the Garland, Folkestone and Glasgow, You are therefore hereby required and directed immediately to sail with the Squadron under your Command along shore to the Northward, and look into Yarmouth roads, and from thence you are to proceed to New Castle, and not finding the Virginia Trade there, to repair off Leith, and send in there for the Virginia fleet to come out and join you, and when they have so done, you are to take the men of War with them under your Command (the respective Commanders whereof are hereby required to obey your Orders) and the Trade with them under your care and Protection, and with the first opportunity of Wind and Weather to proceed with them and convoy them in safety as far as the Gunfleet, and from thence you are to send them to the Nore under Convoy of the Garland, Folkestone and Glasgow aforesaid there to expect farther Orders, And you are with the Squadron under your Command to repair immediately to the Dogger Bank, and cruise there according to my orders to you of yesterday's date. If in your passage to the

Northward you shall meet the Virginia fleet (which you are very carefully to look out for), you are in that case to repair with them as far as the Gunfleet, send them from thence to the Nore with the three men of War aforesaid, and to repair with your Squadron immediately to the Dogger Bank, and Cruise there according as is before directed; But if you do not meet with them, and that they shall be sailed from Leith before you arrive there, you are in that case to proceed immediately from thence to your Cruising Station on the Dogger Bank.

And whereas several East India Ships arrived at St. Helens yesterday from Ireland, and are daily expected in the Downs under Convoy of the ships in the Margin,[1] In case therefore they shall arrive there before you sail, and the East India Ships shall be ready to sail with you, you are to take Care that such of them as go over the Flats be seen in safety as far as Margate roads, and the others to the Gunfleet that go round the Queen's Channel.

Given under my hand this 9th Sept. 1708.

GEORGE.

Endorsed: Received 10th Sept. in the evening.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Windsor. 10 September. 1708.

Sir,—My Lord High Treas. has this morning communicated to the Prince your Letter of yesterday's date from the Downs, by which you represent that the ships which came with you from Spithead are too big to Convoy the Transports to the Coast of Flanders at this season of the year,

[1] Lennox Medway. Assurance.

and therefore propose that some of the smaller ships may be appointed for that service. His Royal Highness has considered therefore, and herewith I send you his Orders by Express, by which you are empowered to make choice of such ships in the Downs to perform this Service as you judge most proper, except those returned from Dunkirk under Command of Cap. Mighells, who is under Orders to proceed with them Northward to secure our Trades from the Enemy. You will find by the Prince his Orders that when the ships you make choice of have seen the Transport ships to Ostend, they must proceed to the Texel, the East India Company having represented that it is of the greatest consequence to have their ships from thence as soon as 'tis possible. I am,

Sir,

Your most humble servant,

J. BURCHETT.

If this Service could be performed, without diverting any of the ships which are properly the Convoy to Turkey, it would be of Service to the Turkey Company ; for should the said Convoy be kept at the Texel, and not ready to sail with you from Spithead, it may be of ill consequence to that Trade.

Endorsed : Received the 11th at noon by express.

ENCLOSURE.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Whereas I have received advice from Captain Mighells, who Commanded the Squadron of her Maj. Ships off of Dunkirk, that the Enemy's Ships are got out of that Port, and sailed Northward ; and whereas you have represented by a Letter

to my Lord Sunderland (which my Ld. Treasurer hath communicated to me) that the ships with which you are arrived in the Downs, with the Transports, are too big to be ventured at this season of the year on the Coast of Flanders, I do therefore hereby empower and direct you (notwithstanding any former Orders which you have received) to make choice of such ships in the Downs as you judge most proper (except those under the command of Captain Mighells) and give the Commander in Chief of them Orders to take under his care and Protection the Transport ships, and Convoy them in safety to Ostend and that then without going in with the ships under his Command, or making any stay, he does without loss of time proceed to the Texel, and bring from thence our East India Ships which are arriv'd there with the Dutch Convoy Northabout. You are to direct him to take care that the said East India Ships be seen in safety over the Flats by some one or more of the ships under his Command, and round the Queen's Channel, (if any of them shall go that way) till they shall be in safety, and that then they return to him in the Downs, to which place you are to Order him to repair with the rest of the ships under his Command ; and you are to give the necessary Orders, that when the ships you thus make choice of, shall have performed the aforesaid service, they do respectively put my former Orders in execution ; And when you shall have sent away the said ships from the Downs, you are with the first sprit [*sic*] of Wind, to repair back to Spithead with the ships named in the Margin,[1] and such others as shall be under my Orders to proceed thither (if any) after

[1] Humber, Boyne, Royal Oak, Bedford, Resolution, Pembroke, Ludlow Castle

you have made the detachment for Ostend and Holland as aforesaid, that so the ships design'd to convoy the Queen of Portugal to Lisbon may be got in readiness to sail against her Maj. arrives at Spithead, to which place you are to take care to Convoy from the Downs the Turkey Trade and all other ships and vessels bound thither which shall be ready to accompany you, in case they shall be willing to proceed with you, otherwise you are to leave the ships bound to Turkey to proceed from the Downs to Spithead with their proper Convoy, when they return from Holland.

Dated at Windsor this 10th of September 1708.

GEORGE.

FROM JOHN FAWLER

Admiralty Office. 11th Sept. 1708.

Sir,—In the absence of the Secretary this acknowledges the rect. of your Letter of yesterday's date, which has been read to the Council to his Royl. Highness; In answer whereto I am Commanded to acquaint you that the City is very much alarmed to hear that the ships under the Command of Capt. Mighells which were designed to Protect the Northern Trades and free the Coast of the Enemy's ships which lately came out of Dunkirk, were Detached to Ostend to Convoy the Troops thither, but since they are already Sailed and so soon expected back; it's hoped that will in some measure satisfy the Merchants. And it being not yet fully determin'd whether the Resolution shall go with you to Lisbon, the Prince's Council desire you will Order her to proceed along with Capt. Mighells, according to the Prince's Orders to him otherwise he will not be strong enough to meet

the 7 ships which came lately out of Dunkirk, and for the same reason, they do desire you will immediately send over the Ludlow Castle to call back the Tartar as well as the Greyhound to proceed along with Capt. Mighells, and that when the Experiment returns from the service she is order'd, you will please to Order her to go to Harwich to refit according to the Orders lately sent to Capt. Mighells on that behalf. The Turkey Company are no less alarmed to hear that their Convoys are sent to the Texel to bring home the East India ships lately arrived there, and therefore the Council desire you will suspend that part of the Orders which you received from the Prince of yesterday's date relating to the Turkey Convoy until you shall receive further Orders, the Council being in hopes that in a very little time they shall be able to appoint a Convoy to fetch the East India ships from the Texel. To which I have only to add that his Highness and Council desire you will, when the Pembroke returns to the Downs, Order her to remain there till further Order, she being none of the ships of your Squad. but design'd on another Service. I am,

Sir,

Your most humble servant,

J. FAWLER.

Endorsed: Received 12th at two in the morning.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Windsor. 11th September 1708.

Sir,—I send you herewith by Express the Prince his Orders, by which you are directed not to send to the Texel for the East India ships, any

of the Turkey Convoy, and I have read this evening to his Royal Highness your Letter of yesterday's date, giving an account of the care you have taken for convoying the Transports with the Troops to Ostend, which his Royal Highness does approve of, and it is to be hoped that they will be timely back again in the Downs to join Capt. Mighells, that so he may proceed to the Dogger Bank for security of our Trade, where the Enemy's ships gone from Dunkirk have been lately seen, or at least hovering thereabouts.

His Royal Highness does also approve of what you have done in sending the Pembroke over to Ostend with some of the Troops that were in a disabled Transport; and I hope there may be suddenly ships found to fetch the East India ships from the Texel.

I believe you will by this night's Post receive from the Prince his Council an answer to that part of your Letter which relates to the Resolution. I am,

Sir,
Your most humble servant,
J. Burchett.

Endorsed: Received the 12th at 3 in the afternoon.

Enclosure.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Whereas I am informed by your Letter to my Secretary dated yesterday, that you have sent the Transports with the Troops to Ostend, under the Convoy of some of the ships commanded by Capt. Mighells, by which one part of what is

directed by my Orders to you of yesterday is performed; and whereas the Turkey Company have represented to me that if the Convoy to their outward bound Trade be sent to the Texel for the East India ships, it may be of the greatest ill consequence to them. I do therefore hereby direct and require you not to send the said ships on the aforesaid Service, but leave them at liberty to put in execution my former Orders in proceeding to Spithead with the Merchant ships bound up the Levant, and Capt. Mighells also to put in execution his Orders, when the ships return to him from Ostend.

Dated at Windsor this 11th September 1708.

GEORGE.

FROM LIEUT. GENERAL ERLE

from on board the Greyhound in the Road of Ostend 10th Sept. 1708.

Sir,—This Evening about 5 o'clock we came to an anchor here but I have not been able to get on shore, the ship lying pretty far distant from the Town. The Transports, which were counted Thirty one at sea, are got into the Harbour except three or four of the largest of them, but the Mary, Robt. Cross Master, unluckily struck going over the Bar and sunk. The men were all saved.

The Quarter Master General whom I sent before to Ostend is returned and gives me an account that the Governor has no Orders for us and only bare information of our coming hither, that there is not Quarters for the men in Town, who must therefore Encamp, nor Provisions to be had, so that we shall be put to great straights when the little that is aboard the Transports is

expended and the fleet is gone from us, since it looks as if we were like to be cut off from any communication here by Land, the Enemy having as I am this night inform'd, five Battalions in Bruges, fifteen in Ghent, 300 men in Plassendael and 300 more cutting the Dykes at Leffinghen betwixt that and Nieuport. The news we have hitherto picked up is as follows; a Gent. that came to Ostend from the Camp this day and who M. Colombiere calls one of the States Deputies, gives this account that the Siege of Lille goes on slowly, that there has been a dispute between the Engineers and one of them put in arrest, that Provisions and Storage begin to grow very scarce in our Camp and that the French are now actually bombarding Oudenarde, so that hitherto things look but with a very ill face here and I wish this may not prove the worst part of our Expedition. I am,

Sir,
Your most faithful and most
humble servt.,
THO. ERLE.

The Sloop came not out with us.

Be pleased to send the enclosed to Ld. Sunderland by Express.

Endorsed: Received 12th by Ludlow Castle.

Note added by Byng:

Capt. Hubert writes me word that Genl. Erle believes My Ld. Marlborough will Order the troops to Williamstat or to some place of Holland. G. B.

PART IV

Sept.-Oct. 1708

VOYAGE TO LISBON WITH THE QUEEN OF PORTUGAL

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

By Godolphin's letter of 13th September it appears that the Cabinet was still undecided as to whether Byng or Jennings should relieve Leake in the Mediterranean. Whichever of them went would have to take out a squadron to Lisbon and use it next spring in combination with such ships as Leake left there on his return home. If no important operations were likely to be undertaken in the Mediterranean, only a small fleet would be required, which would therefore be a more suitable command for Jennings, being junior to Byng. From Sunderland's letter of 16th September it looks as if Byng had asked to be employed near home in the future, but at the same time did not wish to give up what might turn out to be a very important command. Everything really depended upon whether Leake and Stanhope would be able to capture Minorca before the end of 1708, and, if so, in what way the Cabinet would exploit the capture.

Meanwhile Byng was kept busy at Portsmouth in providing convoy for the two regiments going to Ostend and in arranging for the transport of clothing for the Duke of Savoy's army. On 24th September he received leave to come to town and was then definitely appointed to relieve Leake in the Mediterranean. One of his duties would therefore be to arrange for the truce between Britain and Morocco, the articles of which are in his papers, and which in consequence of the war with France and the danger to our trade was of considerable importance.

In addition to his other duties as future commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean Byng was to escort the Queen of Portugal to Lisbon. As far back as 9th July Godolphin had told him that he would be recalled from his coastal operations when the Queen arrived at Portsmouth and that possibly Erle's troops might go out to Lisbon. This

plan, however, we have seen, was negatived by Marlborough. At that time it was also considered that Jennings might take her to Lisbon, but on 1st August Prince George applied to Queen Anne to know how many ships should be detached from Byng's Channel Fleet to go with the Queen of Portugal and definitely implied that Byng himself would command the detachment (S.P. Dom. 42/7).

A good deal depended, however, on the date by which the Queen of Portugal might be expected in England from the Netherlands, and on 10th August Godolphin suggested that she might probably have to wait to cross until the siege of Lille took a more favourable turn. Baker's squadron in the Downs was of course in readiness to escort her from Ostend to Portsmouth, but the transport of such a precious cargo was not to be lightly undertaken when affairs seemed in such a hazardous position. Nevertheless there were no objections to preparing her bed for the voyage to Lisbon (H.R.H.'s orders 20th August), this article having either been sent to England in advance or else made or bought here, and being the subject of a rather humorous letter from Godolphin on 25th September. Meanwhile preparations for her reception in the Royal Anne went forward, and at last on 25th September she arrived at Portsmouth under Baker's escort. On 1st October Byng received his instructions from Prince George. These may be summarised as follows :—

(1) He was to proceed to Lisbon with 11 ships, the Queen of Portugal, and the outward-bound trade.

(2) When off Lisbon he was to detach two ships as convoy to the Turkey trade through the Straits, and these ships were also to take the Duke of Savoy's army clothing to Oneglia if possible. (By further instructions of 10th October these ships were to bring back to Lisbon two Turkey Company ships from Gibraltar, supposing that they did not go to Oneglia.)

(3) He was to send home two ships with the Queen of Portugal's servants and equipage, and with them the homebound trade.

(4) For this service he was to send two of these ships with Leake, if they reached Lisbon in time. (By further

instructions of 9th October the Elizabeth and Stirling Castle were appointed for this service.)

(5) He was to take command of such ships as Leake should leave behind him at Lisbon on his way home and also of any Dutch ships which arrived there.

(6) If the Brazil fleet had not reached Lisbon by the time he arrived he was to hold a council of war to discuss the advisability of sending a squadron to the Terceiras to strengthen its convoy.

(7) As regards offensive operations he was to act on his own initiative in consultation with the English and Dutch flag officers, his duties being defined only in the most general terms; destruction of enemy ships, protection of trade, coastal operations.

(8) He was to co-operate with the Kings of Spain (Archduke Charles) and of Portugal and the Duke of Savoy and arrange for the transport of allied troops where necessary.

(9) He was to exercise disciplinary supervision over the Commissioners and Officers of the Navy Board, victualling, and sick and wounded at Lisbon.

(10) He was to patrol the Straits with cruisers.

(11) He might add five English captains and a proportionate number of Dutch to his councils of war.

(12) He was to supply the garrison of Gibraltar with stores, provisions and ammunition if asked for.

(13) He was to take steps for protecting Gibraltar and the coast of Portugal if necessary.

(14) He was to re-embark all marines previously landed in Spain, except those at Alicante.

(15) He was to arrange for exchanges of prisoners.

(16) He was to put his ships on short allowance of provisions of six to four men's allowance, as soon as he was out of the Channel, taking care to assure the seamen 'that they shall be duly paid for the same.'

(17) If Leake captured Port Mahon Byng was to consider how many ships could be refitted or winter there, and how many at Lisbon, according to the general strategic situation.

The most remarkable feature of these instructions,

apart from their length, is their complete poverty in constructive plans for offensive action against the enemy.

Next came a letter from Burchett stating that H.R.H. simply could not understand why Byng's ships should require so many men. Men cannot be transferred from one ship to another without having their wages paid and 'there is, I doubt, a present want of money to comply therewith.'

On 6th October, Byng's preparations being complete, the Queen of Portugal went on board the Royal Anne and the fleet sailed for Lisbon. On 14th October they were off Cascaes, having had a good passage, and on the 16th they reached the city of Lisbon and landed the Queen.

FROM LORD GODOLPHIN

Windsor. Sept. 13th 1708.

Sir,—I have the favour of yours concerning your staying or not staying, abroad this Winter, upon which I have only to say, that will depend as I believe entirely upon yourself. Sir John Leake has leave to come home and there does not seem to be occupation in the next year for so great a squadron in those seas as has been kept there in this; and your friends, as my Ld. Sunderland, and Mr. Sec. Boyle, have always said you were rather desiring to be at home this winter, upon which when I have happed to be present at any discourse of this matter, I have endeavoured to turn it to, as that the desire of your friends as to your coming back again from Lisbon might be gratified, and that Sir John Jennings might be sent to take the care of the Squadron to be left there at Sir John Leake's return, and to put it in a condition of being early at sea next spring, upon which depends all the fruit of that service and expence; but nothing of this seems to be so entirely settled but that there may be room left still to turn it so as may be most agreeable to your own inclinations; in which I shall be ready to do you all the service in my power, being with great truth Sir,

Your most faithful humble servant,

GODOLPHIN.

FROM JOHN FAWLER

Admiralty Office. 14th Sept. 1708.

Sir,—I have received your letter of yesterday's date, giving an account of your being forced to come to anchor in the Downs, with the Fleet under

your command, which has been communicated to the Prince's Council.

A petition having been sent to the Prince in the name of the seamen aboard the Aldborough, complaining of the want of their share of Prize Money, and of their being furnished with bad provisions, which petition the Council to his Royal Highness direct me to send you enclosed and to desire you will cause enquiry to be made into the same and give an account how you find the matter to be,

Sir,
Your most humble servant,
J. Fawler.

Endorsed : Received 16th.

PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK TO THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF H.M. SHIPS AT LISBON.

Whereas upon the application of Count Briancon, Envoy from his Royl. Highness the Duke of Savoy, I have given Orders to the Captains of several of her Majesty's Ships bound from hence to Lisbon, to receive on board and carry thither considerable quantities of clothing which the said Envoy has now bought here for the use of the army of his Master, and who has also Instructions to buy the like quantity annually. And whereas further application hath been made by him the said Count Briancon, that when there shall be occasion at any time to send any of her Majesties Ships from Lisbon to Barcelona, they may receive so much of the said clothing as conveniently they can, and carry it to, and put

it ashore at the Port of Oneglia, after they shall have despatch'd at Barcelona the affairs on which they were sent thither; I do hereby direct and require you to give such Orders herein from time to time, as may conduce to the most effectual and speedy conveyance of the aforesaid clothing to Oneglia, and that the same be very carefully stowed to prevent its receiving damage; But regard is to be always had that her Maj. service may meet with as little inconvenience, or interruption thereby, as possibly may be.

Dated at Windsor this 15th September 1708.

[*Addressed*]

To the Chief Flag Officer or Commander in Chief of her Majesty's Ships at Lisbon, and in the Mediterranean for the time being.

GEORGE.

FROM LORD SUNDERLAND

Whitehall. Sept. 16th 1708.

Sir,—I am to acknowledge the favour of yours of the 12th instant, which I have laid before her Maj. who does approve of the orders you have given and of everything you have done, so that you need be in no pain upon that head; As to what you mention to me, in relation to a letter you had, from Sir John Jennings, what pass'd in that discourse was occasion'd from your having desir'd to return home, but I believe that matter may be ordered just as you desire, and in a post or two I shall be able to say more to you upon it.

I only beg you to believe that I shall be glad of all opportunities of serving you, and of shewing how sincerely I am,

Sir,

Your most faithfull humble servant,

SUNDERLAND.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Windsor. Sept. the 19th, 1708.

Sir,—I have received your letter of yesterday's date and have this morning read it to his Royal Highness, who is pleased to give you leave to come to Town for 24 hours, as you desire, to settle your private affairs; and 'tis the Prince's pleasure that you give orders to the Senior Captain in your Squadron, to proceed with them to Spithead, the first spirt [*sic*] of wind; as also that you direct Captain Mighells to proceed to the Northward with the ships under his command with the four pilots he has, without staying for any others.

Sir,

Your most humble servant,

J. BURCHETT.

Endorsed: Received 24th.

TRUCE BETWEEN BRITAIN AND MOROCCO

Articles of Renewal of the Truce Between the Most Serene and Potent Princess Anne By the Grace of God, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Defender of the Faith And the Most Serene and Potent Prince Muly Ismael, Emperor of Morocco,

King of Fez, Mequenes, Suz, and All Barbary, Concluded By his Excellency George Delavall Esq: According to the Orders of the Most Serene Queen of Great Britain, and his Excellency Alcayde Aliben Abdola, according to the Orders of the Most Serene Emperor of Morocco.

ARTICLE

1ST. It is agreed and Concluded, that there be a true, firm, and inviolable Truce from this Present day of the 1st of October 1708. N.S. which agrees to the 16th of the Moon Rajeb in the Year 1120. Arabian account, Until the 1st day of October of the Next Ensuing Year 1709. which agrees to the 27th of the Moon Rajeb in the Year 1121. Between the Most Serene Queen of Great Britain etc. and the Most Serene King of Morocco; And Between all the Dominions and Subjects on both sides, and that the Ships and Vessels, with the Subjects of both Parties During the Said Term abovementioned Shall not commit any injury, Damage, or Offence one to the Other, Neither by Word or Action, but shall Treat one another with all Possible Respect and friendship.

2ND. All Ships and Vessels, as well those which belong to the Queen of Great Britain etc. or to any of her Majesty's Subjects, as those which belong to the Emperor of Morocco or his Subjects shall pass freely through the Seas, shewing their Colours to one another, without any Search, Hindrance or Molestation, to Each Other; and if Either of them send a Boat aboard, there shall go in her no more than Two

ARTICLE

Persons besides those that row, and Only those Said Two Persons shall go into the Ship, who being Satisfied that the greatest part of the Ship's Company are Subjects of Either Prince, shall let them pass without any molestation, and All Persons and Passengers of Whatsoever Nation they be, as Likewise all money, Goods, and Merchandise belonging to any Nation or People whatsoever, that shall be aboard any of the said Ships or Vessels, shall be entirely free, without being Detained, taken or Plundered, or Receive any Loss or Damage Whatsoever from either Party During the said Term.

3RD. No Ships nor Vessels of her Majesty of Great Britain etc., or any of her Subjects, nor of his Majesty the Emperor of Morocco nor any of his Subjects, shall Cruise near, or in Sight of any of the Ports or Places belonging to the Dominions of one or the Other, during the Term of the said Truce.

4TH. It is Likewise agreed, that during the Term of the Said Truce no Ship belonging to her Majesty of Great Britain, or any of her Subjects that shall suffer shipwreck on any Part of the Dominions of his Majesty the Emperor of Morocco, shall be made Prisoner nor her goods taken away, nor the Men made Slaves.

5TH. Nor shall any Ship belonging to the Emperor of Morocco or any of his Subjects, that shall suffer shipwreck on any Part of the Dominions of the Queen of Great Britain's shall be made Prisoner nor his

goods taken, nor the Men made Slaves, but the Subjects of both Princes and Nations shall Mutually and Diligently assist each Other, in the Saving of all Such Goods and Vessels.

Signed and Sealed at Gibraltar 1st of October [N.S.] 1708, which agrees with the 16th of the Moon Rajeb of the Year 1120.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Whereas the Lords of the Cabinet Council have directed this Morning, that a Convoy shall be got ready by Tuesday next to proceed to Ostend with the Transport Ships, that are appointed to carry Brigadier Macartney's and Colonel Hill's Regiments of Foot thither from Portsmouth ; you are therefore hereby required and directed to order any two of the ships named in the Margin,[1] in Company of the Dover if she timely comes to Spithead from the Westward, to take the said Transport Ships under their care and Protection, and when the Soldiers shall be Embarked, with the first opportunity of wind and weather to proceed with them and Convoy them in safety to Ostend, directing them in their way thither to see into the Downs the Trade which shall come to Spithead with the Dover, or any other Trade which shall be there bound Eastward, and ready to sail with them ; And whereas there are now at Ostend Ten Transport Ships which lately went thither with Forces and wait there for Convoy back again ; you are to order the Ships aforesaid, when they

[1] Mary
Antelope
Swallow's prize
Ludlow Castle

have seen the Two Regiments safe to Ostend, to take under their care and Protection the Ten Transport Ships aforesaid, or such of them as shall be ready to sail with them, and without staying to bring back the Transports that they carry over, to make the best of their way to the Downs with the Ships under their Command, and the Transports now at Ostend, directing them to send an Account of their proceedings to my Secretary for my Information, and to remain in the Downs till further Order. But if the Dover shall not come to Spithead, by the time the Transports shall be ready to sail with the Two Regiments, you are in that case to appoint any three of the ships in the Margin to proceed on the Service aforesaid.

Given under my hand this 23rd September 1708.

GEORGE.

Endorsed : Received 26 in the morning.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Whereas the Squadron under your Command with which you are arrived at Spithead, is designed to carry the Queen of Portugal to Lisbon, and whereas as the Winds now are her Majesty may be very shortly expected at Spithead from Holland, with the Squadron of Ships commanded by Rear Admiral Baker and the yachts ; You are hereby required, so soon as they arrive, to receive the Queen on board the Royal Anne, together with such of her Retinue as her Majesty shall desire, and the rest of the Retinue, and Servants, you are to cause to be received, and accommodated on

board the other Ships of the Squadron under your Command in the best manner that may be.

Dated at Windsor this 23rd of September 1708.

GEORGE.

Endorsed : Received 24th.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Whereas by the Letters received this day from the Downs I am informed that Rear Adml. Baker is passed by the back of the Goodwins to Spithead, with the Ships under his Command from Holland, so that there is now no occasion to make use of the ships of your Squadron, namely the Mary, Antelope and Ludlow Castle, to Convoy the two Regiments of Foot from Portsmouth to Ostend ; you are therefore hereby required and directed, notwithstanding my Orders to you of yesterday's date, to Order the Montague, Crown, Swallow's Prize, and Dover, if she timely arrives at Spithead, to Convoy the said Transport Ships with the Two Regiments to Ostend according to my Orders of yesterday's date, instead of the ships mentioned therein ; But in case the Dover does not arrive at Spithead by the time the Forces shall be Embarked and ready to sail, you are in that case to Order the Montague, Crown and Swallow's Prize not to stay for the said ship Dover, but proceed without her ; And you are to cause the provisions aboard the said ships to be with all possible despatch completed to two months each for their highest complements of Men, for the better enabling them to perform the service aforesaid. Given under my hand this 24th Sept. 1708.

GEORGE.

Endorsed : Received 26th in the morning.

FROM LORD GODOLPHIN

Windsor. 25 Sept. 1708.

Sir,—This will be given you by the D. of Grafton who is sent by the Queen to make her Compliments to the Queen of Portugal, you will also receive from him a present from her Maj. to the Marquis das Minas, which you are to put into the hands of my Lord Galway, upon your Arrival at Lisbon.

Before I left London, I sent a positive order to the Commissioners of the Customs in the manner desired by the Portugal Envoy, about the bed you mention, so I hope that difficulty is at an end, as to the other of transferring the Queen of Portugal's goods from the yachts to the Royal Anne, no order can be given in form, by me, but by the Commissioners of the Customs only, nor they are not empowered to give such an order without specifying the particulars, but I should hope that in such a Case as this, the chief officer of the Customs at Portsmouth would understand his duty so well, as not to make unreasonable or unnecessary difficulty, and in case you should find him inclined to do so possibly your showing him this part of my letter might bring him to reason ;

I should think the less delay of any kind the better, and that you ought to make use of this fair wind and weather to find a way to Lisbon.

As to your own affair of the money for the Service at Vigo, if there be any or like to be in the hands of the officers of prizes, you may count upon it ; if there should at last prove to be none, it must come out of the Prince's funds for rewards of service done, but I would not apply for that till I am sure there is no prize money remaining,

and then allege that for the reason of such application.

Upon the whole you need not doubt of my assistance in the most effectual manner being with great truth, Sir,

Your most faithful humble servant,

GODOLPHIN.

Endorsed: Received 31.

FROM COUNT BRIANCON

London. September 25, 1708.

Sir,—I have the Honour to send you enclosed the Queen's and Prince's Order for the transporting of cloth from hence to Oneglia, for the use of my Master's troops, and at the same time I take the liberty to acquaint you that in consideration of my Masters having engaged to break off all commerce with France in relation to the woollen manufacture, and to buy the clothing for his army in England, Her Maj. has been pleased to promise to transport the same: and I make it my humble request to you, that when what is aboard the fleet under your Command shall arrive at Lisbon, it may be sent from thence to Oneglia with all possible expedition; for unless it arrives there before Christmas next, it will come too late for the service for which it is designed, and I have no authority to contract for next year's clothing, before I hear of the safe arrival of this. Now seeing this will be of so great advantage to the woollen manufacture of this Kingdom, and of no small importance to my Master's service, I cannot in the least doubt but that you will be pleas'd to take all due care to cause them to be transported as speedily as possibly you can, and that they may

receive no damage at sea. I dare answer that my Master will own your care in this affair as an obligation done to himself, as will likewise he who takes the liberty to subscribe himself with the utmost respect,

Sir,
Your most humble and
most obedient servant,
COUNT BRIANCON.

Since I had the honour to write you this letter I hear that the Sunderland is arrived in the Downs and there being 266 Bales of his Royal Highness my Master's Cloth aboard her, I beg that as soon as she arrives at Spithead, you will be pleased to order the said Bales to be put on Board the ships that you shall think most proper to carry them to Lisbon, lest the fleet should sail before those goods are embarked, which would be a great disappointment, and prejudice to my Master's service. I suppose you have by this time received the orders the Queen has been pleased to give for the carrying of one Claude Baud, my former secretary, prisoner to Oneglia, and I send you enclosed an order to the Governor of that place to receive him, making it my humble request to you, that you would please to put it into the hands of the Captain whom you shall think fit to appoint for that service.

FROM SAMUEL GYLES AND RICHARD HOLMES

Honble Sir,—Shovel [1] has been ashore several times within this Week, and in Mr. Willard of Crowlinks house; we have spoke with the said Mr. Willard since, who makes all the protestations

[1] Name for a French spy. Much spying must have been carried out by both sides through the agency of smugglers.

imaginable that he cannot help it, nor any way avoid them: (as for our parts) we have done what lies in our power to prevent the Country People going to speak with him, and we are positive that they have not been down, but we can no way (tho' we have endeavoured it) prevent the French coming ashore, for they come in such great numbers that we can't withstand 'em and they have fired at us several times since we saw you.

There are Several French Privateers and Frigates now on the Coast; which is all at present from,

Sir,
Your most humble Servants,
SAML. GYLES.
RICH. HOLMES.

East Bourne.
Sept. 27th 1708.

LORD GALWAY TO LORD SUNDERLAND

[EXTRACT]

Lisbon. October the 8th 1708, N.S.

The Ships despatched by the Governor of Balfia with advice of the Brazil Fleet passing by the Terceiras gave the Portuguese Adml. an account they know upon which it was resolved in a Council of War to return hither. That Squadron had not the luck to meet with either of those Vessels that were despatched from hence, with the truth of that matter, Capt. Lyell told me upon his arrival that when they sailed from the Islands he saw 11 Sail of Ships sailing towards the Islands, two of which were Ships of force the, rest small, and that he took them to be French, I thereupon represented this Court the necessity of sending back that Squadron as fast as possible, and I used all my endeavours to get two Dutch men of

War that are to wait here two Months for their Merchant Men, to go out to Strengthen this Squadron. Capt. Lyell's opinion of those eleven Sail was confirmed by the return of one of those Vessels that was sent from hence with advice to the Portuguese Admiral, which gives an account that the French Squadron is among the Islands and has taken the Island St. George, upon which all instances were renewed to get the two Dutch Ships, being a very favourable opportunity to Surprise the French, who hearing thereupon with advice our Squadron left the Islands, would not be prepared for their return, but Mr. Schonenberg could not persuade the two Dutch Commanders to go out, tho' it were but to sail to the Terceiras and back again. So the Squadron sailed yesterday without them, consisting of 5 Portuguese and 3 English. I Pray God they may get there in time and that the Brazil Fleet don't get to the Islands before our Squadron.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Admly. Office. 30th Sept. 1708.

Sir,—This acknowledges the rect. of your three late letters, two of the 27th and one of the 20th inst., which have been laid before the Prince and his Council ; In answer whereto I am commanded by his Royl. Highness to acquaint you, that if the Revenge cannot be got ready to go out with you, she will be ordered to follow you to Lisbon, there being no other ship in the way to be given you in her room, and you are to take the Leake Hospital Ship along with you, for doing of which you will receive the Prince's Orders, and therefore you will please to order her to be Victualled as the rest of your Squadron, if she is not so already.

I send you herewith Orders for your sending the Royal Oak, Bedford and Assurance into Portsmo. harbour to clean and refit, as also for your ordering Don Diego de Meya and Benadvides, a Spanish Sea-Officer, to be carried to Lisbon.

And with this you will likewise receive Eighteen blank Warrants signed by the Prince for Volunteers ; And I desire you to let me know how you dispose of them in the Fleet and to whom, when you have done the same, with the dates of their Warrant, that so they may be recorded in the books of this Office.

The last Letter I had from the Capt. of the Worcester Prize was dated the 14 inst. in Cowes Road, at which time I wrote to him to let him know, that if the Bedford Galley was not gone to the Islands, he should put the Pilots aboard her, and repair to his Cruising Station between St. Ives and Lundy, since which I have not heard from him, so can't tell whether he was sailed or not, before my Letter reached him. I am,

Sir,

Your most humble Serv.,

J. BURCHETT.

Endorsed : Received 1 October.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Instructions for Sir George Byng Knt. Admiral of the Blue, and Admiral and Commander in Chief of her Majesty's Fleet, to be employed in and about the Mediterranean.

Whereas it is her Majesty's pleasure that you shall command her several ships and vessels which now are, or shall be, Ordered into the Mediterranean, for the next year's Service ; and whereas

it is necessary that you should proceed to Lisbon as soon as possible, with the ships named in the Margin [1] hereof, and with them Convoy her Majesty the Queen of Portugal thither ; you are therefore hereby required and directed, to make all possible dispatch in the putting the aforesaid ships into a condition for the Sea in all respects, and then you are, with the first opportunity of wind and weather, to proceed with them on your voyage to Lisbon, taking with you the Turkey Trade and their Convoys, as also the two ships bound to New York, and the Trade bound thither, (the names of which Convoys are also in the Margin [2] hereof) and all such Merchant Ships and Vessels as shall be bound to Portugal, or elsewhere, out of the Channel ; And as you are to see the two Ships of War bound to New York, and the other outward bound Trades, as far as your and their way shall lie together, so are you to take care, that if any Merchant Ships shall be bound to Viana, Oporto, and the other Northern Ports of Portugal, they be conducted in safety thither by one of her Majesty's Ships under your Command ; And you are to take particular care to carry with you all such Ships and Vessels as shall be employed by the Officers of the Navy, Ordnance, Victualling, or Transportation.

When you come off of the River of Lisbon, you are to appoint such two of the Ships under your

[1] Royal Anne
St. George
Revenge (if ready)
Ipswich
Humber
Boyne
Lennox
Suffolk
Mary
Antelope
Ludlow Castle
Hawke, Hunter } Fireships
Leake Hospital

[2] Swiftsure
Canterbury
Tiger
Woolwich
Aldbrough
Kinsale
Maidstone

Command as you judge the most proper, to accompany the Turkey Convoys and the Trade as high up the Straits as Cape de Gat on the Spanish, or Cape Falcon on the Barbary shore, and then leave them to proceed on their Voyage; but in case, according to the intelligence you shall receive of the Enemy's proceedings, and the strength you have with you, you shall judge the said two Ships may be spared to carry the Duke of Savoy's Cloathing to Oneglia, you are, before you send them away, to cause to be put on board the said two Ships, from the others under your Command, so much of the said clothing as they can conveniently receive, and direct their Commanders to proceed therewith to Oneglia, after they part with the Turkey Convoy, and in either of the beforementioned cases you are to give them Orders how they shall join you again.

When you arrive at Lisbon, you are to land the Queen of Portugal, and her Retinue and Servants, with as much expedition as conveniently may be and then you are to order such two of the Ships under your Command as you judge most proper, to proceed to Great Britain with her Majesty's Servants and Equipage, that are appointed to attend the Queen of Portugal in her passage, directing the Capts. of the said two ships to bring home under their Convoy all such Merchant Ships and Vessels as shall be ready to sail with them, and that they call in at Plymouth, and repair from thence to the Downs if they find no Orders there to the contrary. And since Sir John Leake is ordered to repair home with part of the Ships under his Command, and to leave the remainder at Lisbon, you are to take them under your Command, (as well those of her Majesty's as those of the States General) so soon as they arrive there,

and cause all possible despatch to be made in the fitting her Majesty's Ships, and putting them into a condition in all respects for the sea, causing preference to be given to those which you shall find have the least work to do unto them. And in case the ships which Sir John Leake shall send to Lisbon, as aforesaid, shall timely arrive there, you are, instead of two of the Ships which you carry with you from hence, to send such two of them home with the Queen's Servants and Equipage, and the Trades, as you judge most proper.

Upon your Arrival at Lisbon you are to inform yourself whether the King of Portugal's Brazil Fleet is arrived, and if not, you are without loss of time, to consider at a Council of War whether you can have time and opportunity to send some ships of War to the Terceiras to strengthen the convoy, with them, and if it shall be agreed to send some Ships on this Service, you are to do it with all the expedition that may be, giving them such Instructions as shall be judged may most effectually answer the Service, but herein you are to apply to the King of Portugal, and receive his Majesty's advice and directions.[1]

You are from time to time, to employ the whole, or part, of the Ships of her Majesty's, as also those of the States General, which are, or shall be, joined to you, and be put under your Command, in such manner as shall be judged most advantageous to her Majesty's Service, by a Council of War of English and Dutch Flag Officers, either by taking, sinking, burning, or otherwise destroying the Enemy's Ships of War, or those of the Merchants, in the molesting their Trade, annoying their Coasts, or doing what injury you can unto them

[1] The Breda, Berwick and Charles Galley were sent on this service.

on shore. And as you are to hold as frequent correspondence as possibly you can with her Majesty's Ministers at the Courts of Spain, Portugal, and Savoy, so are you, upon any application which shall be made unto you by either of those Princes, to use your best endeavours, with the Fleet under your Command, to assist his Majesty the King of Spain, in the reduction of that Kingdom, and the territories thereunto belonging to his Obedience, in the transportation of any troops, or on any other services which shall be proposed unto you, as also in the assisting his Majesty the King of Portugal, and his Royal Highness the Duke of Savoy, in what they shall desire of you, according as shall be judged most proper at a Council of War as aforesaid, upon your Communicating the same to, and debating those matters with them, regard being always had to the naval strength and motions of the Enemy in or about the Mediterranean.

You are to give such directions to the Commissioners and Officers of the Navy, and Agents to the Commissioners of the Victualling, and Sick and Wounded which are at Lisbon, as you shall judge proper, for the despatch of their several duties in the refitting, cleaning, and victualling the Ships of the Fleet, or taking care of the sick and wounded seamen, and exchange of prisoners of War ; And if any of the Officers of the Navy, Victualling, or Sick and Wounded, shall commit such misdemeanours as may render them unfit to be longer continued in the Service, You are here empowered to remove any of them (except the Commissioner of the Navy) from their employments, and to put others in their stead, as you are also to fill up any vacancies which may happen amongst them by death, while you are abroad :

and you are to give me an account of what you do in these two cases, for my further directions.

And whereas there hath been Advices received that the Enemy's Ships do frequently hover in and about the Straits' mouth, insomuch that the trade of her Majesty's Subjects is thereby much exposed and interrupted, you are to endeavour, in the best manner you shall be able, to have some Cruising Ships in those parts, to free the same from the Enemy, and thereby secure our Merchant Ships and Vessels passing into and out of the Mediterranean.

And whereas it may be reasonable, in regard of the small number of Flag Officers of both Nations which may be with you, to add Five of the Captains of Great Britain, and a proportionable number of Dutch Captains to such Councils of War which you may have occasion to call, I do hereby empower you to do the same, at such times as you shall judge it proper.

In case Application shall be made unto you by the Commanding Officer at Gibraltar, for such Ammunition, Stores or Provisions as the Garrison shall stand in need of ; you are to cause the same to be supplied from time to time, from the Fleet under your Command, so far as it can be well spared, taking care that Receipts be taken from the proper Officers into whose Custody the said Provisions, Stores, etc., shall be delivered. And as you are to inform yourself from time to time of the condition of the said Garrison of Gibraltar, so are you, when the Winter Season approaches, to consider, at a Council of War, what may be necessary to be done for supplying the same with what may be wanted, and for the guarding the Coast of Portugal as the Treaty requires.

And Whereas there are several Marine Soldiers

which have been put ashore at divers places on the coast of the Kingdom of Spain, you are to endeavour, as soon as may be, to take them all on board the Fleet, that they may serve therein, except those which are in Garrison in the City or Castle of Alicante, where it is necessary they should remain.

And since it may happen that the ships under your Command may take several of the Enemy's Subjects Prisoners, either in their Ships of War, or Trading Vessels, or otherwise; you are to take effectual care, by necessary Orders to the Captains under your Command, that such Prisoners be put on shore as soon as possible, at some place where the Enemy may have an Officer to receive them, and that Certificates be taken from the said Officers for them, expressing not only their names, but their Qualities, the which Certificates are to be transmitted by the first opportunity to the Commissioners for Sick and Wounded and for Exchange of Prisoners at War, that they may demand the like number of prisoners, her Majesty's Subjects in lieu of them; But in case the said Prisoners cannot conveniently be put on shore where there is a French Officer, the like Receipts are to be taken from the officers of the ships whereunto they shall belong. When you shall be out of the Channel, you are to put the ships under your Command to short allowance of Provisions of Six to Four Men's allowance, or otherwise, as the Necessity of the Service shall require, assuring the seamen that they shall be duly paid for the same.

And Whereas Sir John Leake with the Fleet under his Command, together with some Land Forces, is gone to Port Mahon, in Order to the reducing that Port, if possible, to the Obedience of

the King of Spain ; In case you shall find that they have had the good fortune to reduce the same, you are at a Council of War to consider how the said success may be improved to the advantage of her Majesty's Service, and the Service of her Allies ; And particularly what number of the Ships of War under your Command may properly be refitted there, or winter at that Port, and what part thereof at Lisbon, with regard to the circumstances of affairs, and the motions and strength of the Enemy, and govern yourself therein accordingly. And since her Majesty's Storeship the Elephant, which is loaden with Naval Stores, is to Accompany you to Lisbon, you are, if Port Mahon be reduced as aforesaid, to take her with you, or send her thither with the stores on board her, together with such other stores from Lisbon as shall be judged proper, but you are to transmit a particular account to my Secretary for my information of what stores you send thither, that so they may be resupplied from hence : as also as frequent accounts as possibly you can of your proceedings from time to time. But if Port Mahon shall not be reduced to the obedience of the King of Spain, you are then to cause the Elephant Storeship to be unloaden as soon as possibly may be, and send her home with the ships that bring the Queen's Servants and the Trade from Lisbon to Great Britain, that so she may be despatched from hence back again to Lisbon, with a further supply of Naval Stores.

Given under my hand this 30th September 1708.

GEORGE.

Endorsed : Received 1 October.

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Admlty. Office. October the 1st 1708.

Sir,—This day I sent you by Express the Prince's Orders for your proceeding on your Voyage to Lisbon, and for your acting with the Fleet under your Command in the Mediterranean.

I acquainted you in the Letter which accompanied the said Orders, that you might by this Night's Post expect answers to several particulars contained in your Letter of yesterday's date; and therefore in the first place I shall mention that part which relates to the men you want to complete your Squadron.

His Royl. Highness does not understand how the ships which are to go with you to Lisbon can possibly want so many men as appear by your Weekly account, and particularly takes notice, that when the Triumph came in she wanted but 38 of her Complement; and it was hoped that most of the other ships would be in no great want. But since it is so, I am commanded to let you know, that there cannot be any men supplied you from other ships now at Portsmouth, for as the late Act of Parliament does particularly direct, that no men shall be removed from one ship to another, without payment, there is, I doubt, a present want of money to comply therewith, and for that reason the men that were in the Torbay and now in the St. George, as also the Newark's men in the Ipswich, are undoubtedly under hardships: but the Navy Board have been often ordered to solicit my Lord High Treasurer for money to pay them and others, and those Gentlemen have undoubtedly as often made their applications to his Lordship, and upon your last Letter

they are again writ to, to do the same; but in case you happen to sail before they can be paid, there will be directions given to pay the Powers which the men shall leave, without putting them to the attendance of the recall. However if you can find any men that have not much pay due to them, in any of the ships at Portsmouth or Spithead (except those which are ordered on immediate Service) who are willing to go with you, the Prince consents that you should take them.

The Boatswain of the Antelope desiring to be superannuated, it is necessary he should send a Petition to the Prince, and that will be referred as usual to the Navy Board, and if he comes within the Establish'd Rules, the Prince will consider of the Gunner of the Furnace Bomb, who you recommend to succeed him.

His Royl. Highness approves of the leave you have given to the Chaplain of the Mary to be on shore, but Mr. Clifton who was formerly Chaplain of the Kent is designed for her again, when she shall be ordered to be fitted out.

What I have more to add is, that there hath been application made to his Royl. Highness, by the Turkey Company, for Convoy for two of their ships, now at Gibraltar, to Lisbon. It is uncertain whether Sir John Leake has had opportunity of doing it, and therefore I am to recommend it to you, that if the two ships which you sent up the Straits with the Turkey Trade do return to you without going to Oneglia, you do give them Orders to call at Gibraltar for the said Turkey Ships, and to bring them and all other Trade bound to Lisbon; or that if the aforesaid ships do proceed to Oneglia, you do provide a Convoy for

the said Turkey Ships to Lisbon, as soon as the other services recommended to you will admit of it. I am,

Sir,
Your most humble Servant,
J. BURCHETT.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Whereas I am informed by a letter from Sir John Leake of the 18th of August last that he has ordered the Norfolk to proceed to Barcelona with several Transports with Corn, and then in Company with the Elizabeth and Stirling Castle to repair to Lisbon with the Transports that are to be Discharged at that place, and from thence to proceed with the Trade to Great Britain ; I do hereby signify the same to you, and do require and direct you, to send her Maj. Servants home by those ships (which attended the Queen of Portugal to Lisbon) if the said ships do timely arrive at Lisbon.

And whereas the three ships named in the Margin [1] are suddenly expected at Lisbon from Brazil, you are to take them under your Command when they arrive there and employ them according as you shall judge best for that Service.

Given under my hand this 9th of October 1708.
GEORGE.

Endorsed : Received 13th November [at Lisbon].

[1] Breda Berwick Charles Galley

PART V

Oct.-Dec. 1708

EXPLOITING THE CAPTURE OF PORT MAHON

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

As soon as Byng reached Lisbon he began carrying out the Prince's instructions of 30th September. On hearing that the Brazil fleet had not yet arrived, he at once put to sea and cruised off the Portuguese coast to look for them, being informed that several French ships had lately been seen off the Burlings. He was soon driven back, however, by bad weather, after which he detached a small squadron to cruise in the Straits. He sent home the trade and some transports from the Mediterranean under three third rates and four Dutch warships.

On 13th November the commander-in-chief of the Brazil fleet arrived under the protection of the original British convoy sent to accompany him home from the Terceiras. His other ships, however, seemed to have been separated owing to his not providing them with signals or with a rendezvous, but they, too, reached Lisbon before the end of the month.

It is quite possible that the complete vagueness which characterised the Prince's instructions of 30th September as regards offensive action was due to the difficulty of making any definite plans until the result of Leake's attack on Minorca was known. On 13th November, however, Byng received news at Lisbon that 'Port Mahon and the whole island of Minorca is reduced to the obedience of King Charles the Third of Spain.' Ever since the beginning of the war a base in the Mediterranean other than Gibraltar had been a crying necessity, and now at last we held it—in the name of King Charles.

Urged on by Marlborough the Admiralty at once set about exploiting the capture by arranging for a powerful squadron to go out and occupy Port Mahon in mid-winter, and so inaugurate a system of exercising permanent naval control over the western Mediterranean.

Byng's instructions of 19th October (received 13th November) were :—

(1) That he should proceed at once to Port Mahon with all the ships he brought from England with the exception of the St. George and the three ships sent to escort the Brazil fleet, which were to remain at Lisbon under Jennings.

(2) He was to report his arrival at Port Mahon to 'Charles III' and then endeavour to join the Anglo-Dutch squadron left behind in the Mediterranean by Leake, under Sir Edward Whitaker.

(3) Having joined Whitaker, he was to make up a squadron of sixteen ships, exclusive of bombs and fire-ships and send the remainder back to Lisbon, except those ships specially detailed by Leake to patrol the Straits.

(4) He was to get his fleet of sixteen ships cleaned, refitted and victualled at Port Mahon and then use them for protecting allied trade and 'annoying the enemy' according to his instructions of 30th September.

(5) If he missed Whitaker, Jennings was to order Whitaker, when he reached Lisbon, to take back to Byng at Port Mahon sufficient ships to make Byng's force up to sixteen.

It might appear that, supposing a strong Mediterranean fleet was necessary throughout the winter, there was no reason why Leake himself should not stay at Port Mahon. He had refused to do so, however, on the grounds that the new base was not yet 'properly furnished as a dock-yard with all the necessary naval or ordnance stores and conveniences for careening' (*England in the Mediterranean*, chap. xxxiii). The idea of sending Byng as a relief was that he should bring with him part at least of these stores from Lisbon.

With the Prince's new instructions came a copy of Leake's instructions to Whitaker on quitting Port Mahon for home, in order that Byng might know how Whitaker's squadron was likely to be disposed. It will be seen from these that Whitaker was himself to return to Lisbon to clean and refit, leaving only four or five frigates in the

Mediterranean, on account of the lack of facilities at Port Mahon. There was a chance, therefore, that he might miss Byng coming into the Mediterranean with the stores, hence the directions for Jennings to send him back again if this happened. These instructions are also printed in Professor Callender's *Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 287–90, with the exception, however, of the names of the two hospital ships.

Before Byng left Lisbon he had to deal with two questions of discipline in the shape of the charges alleged against Lieutenant Nathaniel Belcham and Lieutenant William Parry. Belcham, whose explanatory letters are highly intriguing, seems to have been much the most troublesome of the two, and received sentence of a year's imprisonment in addition to dismissal from the service.

Meanwhile Prince George had died on 28th October, and Byng was informed of this on 18th November by Sunderland in his letter of 2nd November. In it, also, was the hint about getting rid of 'G. Churchill's dominion.' Eleven days later Byng received the Queen's permission to fly the Union Flag, as a commander-in-chief, while outside the English Channel.

On 27th December he sailed from Lisbon for Port Mahon with his flag in the Royal Anne, accompanied by five thirdrates, two fireships, a hospital ship, the Elephant storeship and the Arrogant hulk, the two last carrying the advance part of the dockyard equipment for Port Mahon. He had already sent five smaller ships ahead to Alicante to get into touch with the Governor, General Richards, who was then besieged in the Castle.

FROM LORD SUNDERLAND

Whitehall. Oct. 19th 1708.

Sir,—I hope before this you are got safe with the fleet to Lisbon, the winds here having been as fair for you as is possible. I send you enclosed a Copy of the letter I received yesterday from Majr. Genl. Stanhope with the good news of his having taken Port Mahon. This will inform you how that matter stands and you will receive by this Packet the Prince's orders for your going thither with all things necessary for a Squadron's wintering there ;

I hope the instructions and orders you received before you left Portsmouth were to your satisfaction ; at least I did all I could to get them so as I shall always do, in every thing that may be to your satisfaction or for your Service, for nobody is with more truth and esteem,

Sir,

Your most faithful humble servant,

SUNDERLAND.

I Beg my hble. Service
to Sir John Jennings.

Endorsed : Received 18th November.

ENCLOSURE.

LIEUT.-GENERAL STANHOPE TO LORD SUNDERLAND

Port Mahon. Sept. 30th 1708.

My Lord,—I acquainted your Lordp. in my last that I landed here the 19th instant with 2,600 Men, 1,200 of them English including the Marines, about 600 Portuguese and rest Spaniards,

we found great difficulties in landing and transporting our heavy Artillery and Stores thro' a Country very rocky and where there are very few beasts of burthen. But with continual labour we did in twelve days get up all our Artillery, which consisted of 42 pieces of Cannon and 15 Mortars, to the place near which we proposed to make use of it, and by the 28th at break of day got nine pieces of Cannon in Battery against two Towers which supported a Line the Enemies had made from sea to sea, in a few hours we beat them down and made some breaches in the Line which I designed to attack the next day. But Brigadr. Wade being posted with two Battalions at some distance from me on the right, some of his Grenadiers without orders advanced to the Line and found a way to get into it, to support them he marched with what men he could readily get together to sustain them, and got in ; so soon as we heard the fire I took the ordinary Guard of the Battery and advanced to the line next to me, and such was the consternation of the Enemy that they nowhere stood us but abandoned two other Towers which we could not have taken without Cannon. We lodged ourselves the same evening at the foot of the Glacis of the Main Castle and traced our main Battery to beat it. But the morning following they beat a parley and at five of the clock in the afternoon the Capitulation was signed, which I have not time to get translated but is as they would have it. This morning I have taken possession of one Gate and all their Out works and find them to be above a 1,000 men under arms, which are to be transported in our ships some to France and some to Spain. We have not had fifty men killed or wounded in this siege, I only have had the misfortune to lose my Brother

who had been very instrumental in engaging the Seamen in this Enterprise, and unfortunately would have too great a share in the Execution of it. But since he died in doing service to Her Majesty and his Country I shall think his life well bestowed as I would my own.

I hope the want of Ports will no longer be an objection to wintering a squadron here, Her Majesty being now Mistress of the two best Ports in the Mediterranean, this and Fornelles in the same Island, which tho' not so much known is by many Seamen preferred to this. And having mentioned it to yr. Lordp. I must do justice to Captain Butler and Captain Fairborne who with their two ships went in and battered the Fort till they forced the Garrison to yield themselves prisoners of war. A Detachment of foot I sent has likewise taken prisoners of war 100 soldiers who were in Ciudadela, the Capital of this Island, which is now entirely ours. A great part of our Success in reducing the Island is owing to the zeal and affection the people have for us which is beyond expression, and whoever shall take care to keep up this disposition which is easily to be done need not fear to lose any of the three abovementioned Fortresses. This consideration makes me offer it as my humble opinion that England ought never to part with this Island which will give the Law to the Mediterranean both in time of war and peace. For this reason I will leave an English Garrison here, and hope I have so disposed it as not to give any jealousy or uneasiness to the King of Spain for Troops being mightily wanted in Catalonia I shall make rather a merit to myself by carrying back thither all that I brought out and borrow Marines of the Ships to leave here. As for a Governor I have with me Colonel Petit, an

Engineer who for his eminent services in both sieges of Barcelona, the good success of which may chiefly be imputed to him, had got from the King a Commission of Brigadier, and frequent promises of some further reward, him therefore I leave here as Governor and will be answerable for his behaviour. I give him two Commissions, the one as empowered by the Queen which he is not to make shew of but upon necessity, and the other as a General of the King's for I know not whether I have informed your Lordp. that I have a Commission from the King of Spain of Lieut. Genl. which has enabled me to perform this service, and many others which I could not have done without it, and I hope I shall have Her Majesty's approbation for having accepted of it.

I received last night a letter from the King acquainting me that 4,400 Men are ready, part at Naples and part at Finale to be embarked for Catalonia and desires ships may go to Convoy them. Sir Edw. Whitaker will take care to see it done, and I hope I shall not be disapproved for having been so industrious in procuring this reinforcement, concerning which I sent Mr. Craggs to England, and for having engaged that Her Majesty will pay them when here, since we are to pay neither Levy Money nor for Victualling or Transporting them. I know not how soon Sir Edw. Whitaker may be back from Italy to Catalonia but should be very glad [*sic*] I could against his return receive from your Lordp. an answer to this Letter, for I will hope that so soon as you know in England of this success will send orders either for him to stay till Spring, or take Measures that a Squadron may be early here to receive him. The present posture of affairs in Italy makes it more necessary than ever, and the Italians, who will certainly be frighted at our having

gained such a footing for our Naval Forces in the Straits, will laugh at us if we do not know how to make use of it. Provisions may be had in Italy; there is at Majorca a Magazine of Masts sufficient to serve a squadron three times as strong; they may make hulks to careen of some of the Transports, and I am satisfied that with a little industry they might make a shift for what other things may be wanting till supplies be sent from England. Yr. Lordp. must pardon me if I am so prolix on this Subject, 'tis because I am fully convinced that without having constantly a Squadron to attend the war in Spain you had better give it quite over.

I shall stay here a few days to settle this Garrison, and give directions for adding to the Fortifications what may be necessary. We have found in it above a 100 Cannon, 3000 Barrels of Powder and all things necessary to make a good defence, except Resolution in the Garrison, 500 of which are French Marines. I am ever with all imaginable respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most humble
and obedient servant,
JAMES STANHOPE.

This will be delivered to Yr. Lordp. by Captain Moyser, my Aide de Camp, who is a very deserving young gentleman, and will return to me with Yr. Lordp.'s Commands.

FROM PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK

Whereas Port Mahon and the whole Island of Minorca is reduced to the obedience of King Charles the third of Spain; And her Maj. having

upon the representation of Mr. Stanhope, her Envoy to the said King of Spain, by which he declares that sixteen ships of war may be sufficient to answer all Services in the Mediterranean this Winter, signified her Pleasure that you shall winter there with the said Number of Ships, since Port Mahon is reduced to the obedience of the King of Spain, as aforesaid, and that we may have the free use thereof to Clean, refit, and victual them there, and that thereby they may be in the greater readiness to answer such Services as the King of Spain and the Duke of Savoy may have for them, and to annoy the Enemy; You are therefore hereby required and directed, in pursuance of her Maj. Pleasure, to leave at Lisbon Sir John Jennings, Vice Admiral of the Red, with the St. George, as also the Breda, Berwick and Charles Galley which are Cruising for the King of Portugal's Brazil Fleet. In case they shall be there upon your receipt hereof, and the Revenge which will suddenly follow you, and with the remainder of the ships which proceeded with you from Great Britain, you are without loss of time to proceed to Port Mahon, and carry with you thither the Elephant Storeship, and what other Stores and Victuals there are at Lisbon, which you shall judge necessary and can be spared for the refitting and victualling the Squadron which is to be under your Command, and having seen them safe into that Port, you are either to go yourself, or send a Frigate to Barcelona (which you shall judge most for the Service) with advice to the King of Spain that you are there and ordered to winter in those parts, and then endeavour to join the Squadron of her Maj. Ships and those of the States General under Command of Sir Edward Whitaker, Rear Admirl. of the Red, as soon as possibly may be, if you do not meet

them in your passage; And that you may the better know how to govern yourself in the doing thereof, you will herewith receive a Copy of the Instructions given to him by Sir Jn. Leake, when he left him at Port Mahon.

Having joined him the said Sir Edw. Whitaker, you are to consider what ships then under your Command may be most proper to keep with you, for the making up those which he has left on the Coast of Catalonia and Valencia Sixteen Sail, besides Fireships and Bomb Vessels, which ships you are to keep with you accordingly, and order the remainder, except those appointed by Sir Jn. Leake, to be left for the security of the Straits' mouth, to repair forthwith to Lisbon and follow the Orders of Sir Jn. Jennings, who you are to direct to take them under his Command so soon as they join him, and that he takes particular care to put them into condition for Service as soon as may be, and employs himself with them from time to time for the security of the Coast of Portugal, the protection of the Brazil Fleet, if they shall not be arrived and the King of Portugal shall desire it, and in the performance of any other Services which shall be recommended to him by his said Maj. the King of Portugal, according as shall be judged most proper by a Council of War, which you are to direct him on all such occasions to assemble, and to send me as frequent accounts as may be of his proceedings.

Having thus provided for the Service of Portugal you are with the rest of her Maj. Ships which shall be then under your Command and those of the States General as also such others as may be ordered to join you, to continue in the Mediterranean giving the necessary Orders for the Cleaning, refitting and victualling her Maj. Ships at Port Mahon as

there shall be occasion, and as you shall judge most proper: And you are to employ them from time to time in the Service of the King of Spain, and the Duke of Savoy, and in protecting the Trade, of her Maj. Subjects and her Allies, and annoying the Enemy, according as you are directed by my General Instructions to you dated the thirtieth of the last month.

And since Sir Jn. Leake has by his Instructions directed Sir Edward Whitaker to leave four or five Frigates to Cruise upon the Coast of Catalonia and Valencia (as aforesaid) and to perform any Services which may be desired by the King of Spain, or Lieut. General Stanhope, you are either to continue them on that Service, or to cause it to be done by some other of the ships under your Command, unless you shall find there is an absolute necessity to call them off, and to employ them on a more necessary Service.

And whereas her Maj. has received an account from Mr. Stanhope that there are a considerable quantity of Masts fit for her Maj. Ships at Majorca, which he will endeavour to procure the King of Spain's Orders for the delivery of to you, you are to endeavour to get the said Masts in your possession, and to place them in her Maj. Magazines at Port Mahon.

But notwithstanding what is before directed, lest you should happen to miss of Sir Edw. Whitaker in your passage up the Straits, by which means you may not have a sufficient number of ships with you to make up these on the Coast of Catalonia and Valencia Sixteen Sail, you are to leave Orders with Sir Jn. Jennings to make choice of so many of the ships which Sir Edwd. Whitaker brings to Lisbon, which are in the best condition, as will make up that Number, and direct him to

Victual them up, and then without loss of time to send them to you to Port Mahon, under Command of him the said Sir Edwd. Whitaker. Given under my hand this 19th of October 1708.

GEORGE.

ENCLOSURE.

SIR JOHN LEAKE TO SIR EDWARD WHITAKER

Pursuant to the resolutions taken at a Council of War held the 3rd Instant, you are hereby required and directed to take the Ships of Her Majesty's and those of the States General named in the Margin [1] under your Command and give all possible assistance with the Marines and Seamen to Lieutenant General Stanhope and the Forces under his Command in the reducing Port Mahon and the rest of the Island of Minorca to the Obedience of His Catholic Majesty, and when that Service is performed, or that the Lieut. General is in a condition to carry on the Siege without the assistance of the Squadron under your Command (regard likewise be had to the Season of the Year, the time your Provisions may last, and the Transporting four Thousand of the Emperor's

[1] Chichester
Torbay
Firm
Northumberland
Nassau
Defiance
Essex
Dunkirk
York
Colchester
Centurion
Winchester
Sorlingues
Milford
Fowey
Falcon
Medway's Prize
Terrible Fireship
Blast, Granada } Bombs
Smyrna Factor, Martha } hospital
Gouda, Rotterdam, Arnhem

Troops from Naples to Barcelona for the Service in Catalonia) you are then to proceed to Leghorn and after you have taken on board all your Ships a month's Provisions at whole allowance for their highest Complement of Men, which I have order'd the Agent Victualler at that Place to get ready against you arrive there, you are then to make the best of your way to Naples, and Transport from thence to Barcelona the aforementioned Troops. But if they are not ready, nor Orders from the Emperor for their being embarked for the aforementioned Service, you are then to proceed as aforementioned without them, and having acquainted the King of Spain with your proceedings, and performed any Service his Majesty or Lieutenant-General Stanhope may propose to you, which may be Judged by a Council of War to be practicable to be undertaken by the whole or part of your Squadron, with regard to the time your provisions may last, and the season of the year, you are to repair to Lisbon, and with all possible diligence get the Squadron cleaned and refitted for the Sea upon any emergent occasion, only you are to appoint four or Five Frigates to Cruise on the Coast of Catalonia and Valencia, and to perform any other Service which may be desired by His Majesty the King of Spain or Lieutenant-General Stanhope, leaving such Orders with their respective Commanders, as you shall Judge most for the Service, and that they clean and refit at Genoa, Leghorn or Majorca, if the latter may be convenient once in two Months, if the Service they may be upon will admit thereof.

And whereas you will receive herewith her Majty's Instructions to me of the 4th May last for demanding satisfaction of the Pope, you are to put the said Instructions in execution before you leave the Mediterranean, if you have time and

can do it with consistency to the other services you are to perform, and it shall be judged practicable by a Council of War to be undertaken.

When you proceed to Lisbon, you are to take under your care and convoy all the Transports and others employed in Her Majesty's Service which are at Barcelona, except those which are appointed to supply the Army in Catalonia with Corn, and on your arrival at Lisbon, to send to Great Britain by the first Convoy, those that are to be discharged in the River Thames and other places, and order the rest to be discharged at Lisbon.

In case application shall be made to you by the Commanding Officer at Gibraltar for such ammunition Stores or Provisions as the Garrison shall stand in need of, you are to cause the same to be supplied from time to time from Lisbon, or the Ships under your Command, so far as can be well spared, taking care that receipt be taken from the proper Officers into whose Custody the said Provisions Stores etc. shall be delivered.

And as you are to inform yourself from time to time of the condition of Gibraltar, so are you to endeavour in the best manner you shall be able to have cruising Ships in those parts, to protect the Trade of Her Majesty's Subjects and her Allies, and annoy the Enemy, taking care as much as in you lies that the Ships you Order on that Service may be ready to join you, if the King of Spain's affairs in Catalonia shall require your going to his assistance, and in such case you are to consider at a Council of War, whether to go yourself with all the Squadron, or send part of them, according to the Intelligence you may receive of the Enemy's Naval Strength at Sea.

If Port Mahon and the rest of the Island of Minorca shall be reduced, you are to take off as

many of the Marines as will man each ship of your Squadron to the highest Complements, and leave the rest to garrison the place, otherwise you are to take them all on board, and cause them to be borne on the Ships' Books as usual, till they shall be otherwise disposed of.

You are from time to time to send an account of your Proceedings to Mr. Secretary Burchett for the information of his Royal Highness the Prince, Lord High Admiral of Great Britain and Ireland etc., for which this shall be your Warrant, dated on board the Albemarle before Port Mahon, Sept. 7th 1708.

J. LEAKE.

FROM CAPTAIN ROBERT HUGHES

Sir,—My first Lieut. Mr. Belcham having been guilty of breach of orders, and threatening me publickly upon the Quarter deck in time of service by reason I did send my second Lieut. Mr. Story on board a French ship we put ashore near Marbella and not him, also neglect of watch and too frequently drinking extravagantly as from [?] the enclosed for which I have confined him and pray he may be brought to a Court-Martial. I am,

Hon: Sir your most obed: hum: Sert:,

RO. HUGHES.

Winchester, Lisbon.
27 Oct: 1708.

FROM CAPTAIN ROBERT HUGHES

Winchester. [No date or endorsement.]

On Wednesday 26 May being in chase of two French ships and a settee and almost up with the biggest, ordered a clear ship and guns out—but

—fearing should lose our oars by reason had ordered the people to thrust them out with lanyards on the Starbd: side, after that considered how careless Sailors are when in a hurry and how serviceable the oars were—believed 'twould be more secure to haul them from the Starbd: over to the Larbd: side, so I called for Mr. Belcham to go down to his quarters and get all the oars from the Starbd: over to the Larbd: side and to have those guns out and clear having a spring upon our cable to heave the side to should we anchor. This I ordered him to go down immediately and see done himself—sometime after I looked over the side to see what despatch was made, saw some oars swimming astern others going overboard and not a gun out, called for Mr. Belcham to know why my orders were not obeyed, shewed him the oars swimming and checked him for the wilful breach of orders; then he went down and not before. The Enemy presently after fired at us and as soon as I saw her so near the shore that 'twas impossible to come up with her before she was aground I ordered Mr. Story to go into the boat and the first opportunity aboard her to secure the ship or put out the fire, should they attempt to burn her—then Mr. Belcham came upon the quarter deck up to me in such a fury and said he was first Lieut: and would not be used so; my answer was, 'twas in my power to send whom I pleased aboard of a prize, and that for a reason he knew he never should go, then he talked about putting out the fire, my answer was Mr. Story I thought could do it as well. Mr. Belcham returned with threatening and shaking his long-Glass said he should some time meet me (as I understood him) ashore and then he would do himself Justice, and it was spoke with such a provoking air and

publicly before the ship's company that I told him he should have taken another time and place, not in service, to have threatened me thus, and that I would first confine and try him for his breach of orders and this misdemeanour and then give him what satisfaction he pleased himself.

He very rarely kept his watch but has made a constant practice of drinking till three and four in the morning when he should be on his duty and has been so drunk in his cabin that he could not hear or speak, particularly in a hard gale of wind when we broke our foreyard and then near the shore. When I last cleaned at Lisbon, notwithstanding the strict orders gave him to despatch the Stores out of our ship, the minute I went to wait on the flag he left the ship and stayed two days and nights, then [?] came on board and went away immediately again without saying one word to me, tho' in the ship, and stayed a day and night longer and when he came on board 'twas about six in the morning very drunk, hardly able to walk. His irregular drinking has been frequent till 5 and 6 of the Clock in the morning, keeping the boat and crew with him tho' I have ordered him to the contrary and the Coxswain has told him 'twas my orders the boat should not stay longer than 7 in the evening to prevent the people's being murdered in the night.

Ro: Hughes.

FROM LIEUTENANT BELCHAM

Ocber [*sic*] 28th 1708. Winchester.

Sir,—I humbly ask your Honble. pardon that I have been so remiss in not making my humble Application till now. I hope my crime may prove

pardonable when you are rightly informed, that I have not been allowed the liberty to write, (the [*word illegible*] to his Royl. Highness or the Rt. Hon. his Council) but my Letters have been stopped by the unjust proceedings of my Captain, only such as I have sent by stealth. Sir, this morning Capt. Hughes sent me word that you are pleased to order me a speedy Trial, in my humble opinion this will be the hardest case in the World, tho' I'm well assured that I may rely upon Yo. Honour and Favour in respect to an impartial hearing, but this is the mighty hardship, that of so many Evidences as I have in the ship, not one dare appear in the justice of my Case for fear of their Captain's ill usage.

During the whole time of my Confinement I have many times made my Application to his Roy. Highness, humbly desiring that I might be sent for home, where I think I shall not want for just evidence to prove the many abuses I have received from Capt. Hughes, and not only to myself, but of his unjust proceedings in many things, as wronging her Majesty, and her Subjects, as I have lately mentioned in a letter to the Hon. Councillor Churchill in about twelve or fourteen Articles, some of which seem to me both forgery and perjury; all which are things not to be proved here, but at the Navy Board where I have likewise writ.

And since it has been my hard fortune to bear such a long, and destructive Confinement, I humbly beg that I may continue the same till I can promise myself a more just trial than I can with reason expect here, 'tis plain, the reason of my Captain desiring me to be tried here is not to suffer for any Crime of mine, but to prevent my proceeding against him, and since I am

informed that our ship is bound home, I humbly beg the Trial may be delayed till then, notwithstanding if it shall be your pleasure to compel me to a trial it is my duty to submit to all the hardships. Who am with Due Respect, Sir,

Your Honour's most obed: humble Servant,
NATH. BELCHAM.

FROM LIEUTENANT BELCHAM

Ocber. [*sic*] the 29th 1708. Lisbon.

Sir,—I humbly take the liberty of giving your Hon: an account of some differences between Capt. Hughes and myself, of which I have had no part, but only in a barbarous and unjust Confinement of above five months which has almost ruined me, I being very subject to lameness.

Sir, I am afraid you have been abused with false Reports from my Captain. The following lines are a just and impartial Account of what is called my Crime ; Viz. The 20th of May we having chased a ship ashore near Marbella when the Enemy was making their escape in the Boats, I several times begged of my Captain that I might go with the Pinnace and prevent their setting the ship on fire, which he refused. In a very short time after the ship was on fire in one small place which seemed to be in the steerage or Great Cabin. Then I again came to my Captain with these words, ' pray Sir let me go now with the Boat, and I will put out the fire and save the ship or By God I'll lose my life.' He bad me go and when I was at the side stopped me and said Mr. Story should go, who was not then upon deck ; while he was by the Capt's. Order getting arms, Grenades and other things in the Boat, this delayed

him about a quarter of an hour till the fire was increased that he thought it not safe to go aboard.

When Mr. Story was near the ship and could not venture aboard I must confess I was concerned to see such a ship lost by neglect. I then calmly told my Capt. the ship might have been saved with ease, and I would have put the fire out, if I had gone in time. He answered me in a passion thus, ' By God you never shall go aboard of any for a Reason I know.' This plainly appears his malice to me was a disappointment to the Service. This unexpected return from my Capt. obliged me to make an answer in his own dialect in these words, ' By God, Sir, if you continue to use me ill I may find a time to do myself justice and I will resent this as I ought to do.' On these words only he ordered me to my Cabin where I went without saying a word more. I humbly conceive this could not tend anyway to a challenge, I Declare before God that I had no other meaning but by making a right application not only of this but abundance more of very unfair usages, most of the Officers and ship's Company can evidence the truth of this, and the majority of them have several times declared, this ship would have been saved, if I had gone in the Boat when I desired it, and I'm of opinion they will justify the same when they have the liberty to speak without fear. Notwithstanding all this justice on my side, after I had been confined a month to my Cabin to show that I was not contentious but desired peace, I four times asked my Liberty of Commodore Moodie and Capt. Hughes, but nothing would serve them but my Ruin (or a base, unjust Submission) which to me is the same thing.

What augmented this difference was Capt. Hughes's unjust proceeding in taking the whole

Cargo of Bail Goods out of the settee and brought them into his own Cabin and afterwards sold the same Vessel, and all, without any agent for us or the Ship's Company, and without any Condemnation, as myself, and five other officers humbly represented to his Royal Highness in a petition, of which I have a Copy.

My Capt. has endeavoured to baffle and fright some of these Officers which signed the petition, and has obliged them to give something under their hands against themselves. It's my humble opinion this cannot anywise detract from a thing which is so just and True as I will make appear before His Royl: Highness. I Humbly crave your Honour's Consideration of what is here mentioned by Sir,

Yo: Most obedient Humble Servant,
NATH. BELCHAM.

COURT MARTIAL

At a Court Martial held on board her Majesty's Ship the Royal Anne in Lisbon river the 3rd November 1708.

PRESENT.

Sir George Byng Adml. of the Blue etc. President.
Sir John Jennings Vice Adml. of the Red.

Capt. James Moodie.	Capt. Edw. Hopson.
Capt. Robert Wynn.	Capt. Ph. Cavendish.
Capt. Robert Kirktown.	Capt. Charles Fotherby.
Capt. Wm. Cleaveland.	Capt. Ba. Candler.
Capt. Rd. Culliford.	Capt. Nich. Haddock.

All duly sworn Pursuant to a late Act of Parliament, etc.

Enquiry was made by the Court into the Grounds of the Accusation of Captain Hughes of the Winchester, and the several Articles complained of by him against Mr. Belcham his First Lieutenant

1st for neglecting his duty on his Watch.
2dly for not obeying his orders.
And 3dly for threatening him upon the Quarter Deck with menacing and very insulting language.

After Examination of the Evidences produced on both sides it appears to the Court that Mr. Belcham the first Lieutenant has been guilty of Quarrelling, and Breach of Discipline in a very notorious manner, and does accordingly Adjudge him to fall under part of the 21st. 23. and 27th. Articles of the Statute made in the 13th Year of the Reign of King Charles the 2nd. and does pass Sentence, that the said Lieutenant Belcham be rendered incapable of serving any longer in her Majty's Navy as an officer, and be Imprisoned for the Space of one Year.

G. Byng.	Ri. Culliford.
J. Jennings.	E. Hopson.
J. Moodie.	Phil. Cavendish.
Robt. Wynn.	Charles Fotherby.
Robt. Kirktown.	B. Candler.
Will. Cleaveland.	N. Haddock.

FROM LORD SUNDERLAND

Whitehall. Nov. 2nd 1708.

Sir,—I have the favour of yours of the 18th of Oct. and am heartily glad you had so good a passage

to Lisbon. It's very fortunate that so many of the Brazil Fleet, are got in safe, notwithstanding the blunders of the Portuguese Commander, and what you have done in going out to look for du Guay and protect the rest of the Brazil fleet not yet come in gives universal satisfaction to everybody here; you will hear by this Post the news of the Prince's death, I will say nothing upon it, but that it opens an easy way to have everything put upon a right foot, and I do really believe it will be so and that we shall effectually get rid of G. Churchill's dominion.

I will trouble you with nothing more but beg you to believe that nobody can be with greater truth and esteem,

Sir,

Yr. most faithful humble servant,

SUNDERLAND.

Endorsed: Received 18th.

FROM THE QUEEN

ANNE R.

[sig].

Our Will and Pleasure is, and We do hereby Empower and direct you, upon your receipt hereof, to hoist the Union Flag at the Maintopmasthead on board such one of the Ships of the Fleet under your Command as you shall think fit, and continue to wear the same during your being abroad and until you return into the Channel, and then you are to strike the said Flag, and hoist the Blue Flag at the Maintopmasthead on board such Ship where you shall be.

Given at Our Court at St. James's the 10 day of November 1708, in the seventh Year of Our Reign

To Our Trusty and Welbeloved Sir George Byng Knt. Admiral of the Blue and Admiral and Commander in Chief of Our Fleet to be Employed in and about the Mediterranean.

By her Maj. Command.
J. BURCHETT.

Endorsed: Received 29th.

FROM CAPTAIN JOHN HARTNOLL

Restoration at Lisbon. Dec. 10th 1708.

Honble. Sir,—I take it to be a great misfortune to a Captain of a Man of War; to have such Officers under him, that he must be obliged, in justice to the Service, to complain of their neglect of duty, and carriage to himself (I am sure 'tis so with me). But this is now my case, and with much regret I make this complaint. That Mr. Willm. Parry my 3rd Lieut. (according to your directions, for sending an Officer ashore, to keep them together at their duty, in getting the Masts, and other timber aboard the Arrogant), was sent by me, three days, on that Service with orders accordingly. But as soon as he came ashore, or a little time after, he left the people to themselves, to do as they pleased, and came on board at night, in other Ship's boats; beating, and abusing the officers on the Quarter deck; but for what reason I don't know; he not acquainting me with any misdemeanours they had committed, according to his Instructions as Lieut. he ought to have done.

And some time last week he went out of the ship, without my leave, or knowledge ; and at my first coming in here, lay ashore also, when there was a boat to attend him. But in more particular, I am informed this Morning, by some of my Warrant Officers, and others, that two days ago, in their company, he used very reproachful language towards me, calling me old Rascal, Villain, Scoundrel, and all the Billingsgate Language, could be thought of, on the Quarter deck, before the Ship's company ; repeating it several times with damning me, and his commission, and continued this railing, swearing, and damning, from two till near nine o'clock at night, in the most affronting manner imaginable, towards me. And when he was in a modest way rebuked by the Surgeon, he swore damn him, they were all of my party, and sided with me, and would fight him for it, and next morning went down to his Cabin, to call him to go ashore accordingly for which and the other Misdemeanours before specified, I have confined him to his Cabin ; and humbly pray you will cause it to be enquired into, at a Court Martial. I am,

Sir, with utmost respect,

Your Most Obed. Servant,

J. Hartnoll.

COURT MARTIAL

At a Court Martial held on board her Majty's Ship the Royal Anne in Lisbon River, this 13th December 1708.

PRESENT.

Sir George Byng Admiral etc. President.
Sir John Jennings, Vice Adml. of the Red.

Capt. Tho. Lielle [*sic*].
Capt. William Cleveland.
Capt. Vincent Cutter.
Capt. Rich. Culliford.
Capt. Tho. Long.
Capt. Tho. Smith.
Capt. Rob. Hughes.
hon. etc. Capt. Algernon Grevile.
Capt. Rob. Harland.
Capt. Bar. Candler.

All duly sworn pursuant to a late Act of Parliament etc.

Capt. Hartnoll of the Restoration having accused his 3rd Lieutenant Mr. William Parry on several heads; Enquiry was made by the Court into the Grounds of the several Articles that were charged against him, and after a due examination of the evidences, and deliberation on the whole matter, have Adjudged his Offences to fall under part of the 23rd Article of the Statute made in the Reign of King Charles the Second for using reproaching and provoking Language against his Captain, and under part of the 27th Article of the said Statute for negligently performing her Majty's Service that he was sent on, and does accordingly dismiss the said Mr. William Parry from his Employment of Lieutenant of the Restoration.

G. Byng.
J. Jennings.
Tho. Lielle [*sic*].
W. Cleveland.
Vint. Cutter.
Ri. Culliford.
Tho. Long.
Tho. Smith.
Ro. Hughes.
A. Grevile.
R. Harland.
Barth. Candler.

PART VI

1709
MEDITERRANEAN OPERATIONS

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

HAVING entered the Mediterranean, Byng, with his flag in the Royal Anne, was off Cape Palos on 3rd January, 1708/9, and endeavoured to run into the Bay of Alicante, but was driven off by a N.N.W. gale. He therefore bore away for Port Mahon, but when only four leagues off it on 5th January he encountered another gale with snow, which drove him towards Sardinia and separated part of his squadron. On 12th January he entered Port Mahon and found that most of his squadron had already arrived, but that the Boyne and Arrogant were still missing. This was most unfortunate, for although the ordnance stores had arrived safely in the storeship, most of the naval stores were in the Arrogant, and hence refitting after the storm was a matter of great difficulty, especially when the Boyne was eventually brought in having lost her main and mizzen.

It was of the utmost importance to the allied cause that prompt and vigorous measures should be taken for the relief of the castle of Alicante, where Richards was continuing his heroic defence. Byng had hoped to hear some news of him from his advanced squadron, but it reported that having anchored in Alicante Bay on 4th January it had been unable to land anyone or to get into communication with the castle.

Meanwhile Byng had ordered Whitaker, who was embarking imperial troops on the coast of Italy, to join him at once, as it was useless to attempt the relief without a very strong landing party, seeing that the enemy had 14,000 men besieging the castle and a powerful train of artillery. This meant that they would probably be able to oppose any attempt to land in the Bay unless made in strength and under heavy covering fire from the

ships. Stanhope arrived at Port Mahon from Barcelona on 14th March to discuss the situation, and five days later Whitaker and his squadron also arrived bringing 3,500 imperial troops.

Byng naturally remembered the obstinate resistance of Alicante Castle to the Allies in 1706 and was probably in no great uneasiness about Richards' position, but valuable time had been lost, and he was not able to sail till 28th March, when he left Port Mahon with eleven of the line and all the troops under the command of Stanhope.

They touched at Palma (Majorca) in order to embark another imperial regiment and reached Alicante Bay on 5th April and anchored as close in as possible to the enemy's works. Next day Byng ordered the Defiance, Dunkirk, Essex, York and Northumberland to open a heavy fire on the enemy's positions while Stanhope attempted to land, but the enemy were clearly alive to such a possibility, and had artillery mounted to develop a heavy fire towards the sea. The attacking force therefore made little impression and itself received some damage; moreover, the wind coming on to blow from the south-east, the Northumberland and Dunkirk ran aground several times, being at moments in under four fathoms of water. The whole squadron had therefore to draw out to sea, and, the weather continuing bad, on 7th April Byng and Stanhope decided that a relief was impossible owing to the superior numbers of the enemy and their control of the landing places. They therefore sent an officer ashore under a flag of truce to see what terms they could get for the garrison, supposing that it was agreed to surrender the castle. It was only then that they learnt of the tragedy of 20th February, when Richards and eleven of his senior officers had been crushed to death in the rock. Nevertheless d'Asfeld proved quite accommodating, and allowed d'Albon to embark his garrison with the honours of war.

Byng sailed north to Tarragona, where he landed Stanhope and the imperial troops, and then proceeded to Port Mahon with the Alicante garrison. Here he was joined by Jennings on 28th May with an Anglo-Dutch

squadron of sixteen ships, together with about forty corn, provision and store ships.

Byng was now at liberty to undertake any operation he chose ; he was occupying a base which was unlikely to be attacked within two hundred miles of the Catalonian coast, and he was not faced by any appreciable opposition from Toulon. England had achieved complete naval supremacy in the western Mediterranean. How was that supremacy to be exploited ? The fact that it was not exploited at all was not due to any backwardness on the part of Byng and his flag officers, but rather to the state of chaos into which the campaign on land was fast degenerating. Byng's position at Port Mahon, which would have been priceless in the years 1704 to 1707, was of much less value in 1709 owing to the lack of definite major objectives for combined operations. Toulon was impregnable, the fighting in Spain was becoming desultory and lifeless, and the only grand advantage to be reaped instantly was the control of trade.

Meanwhile on 10th March Byng had received Lord Pembroke's instructions for his future conduct, but they said nothing about any concrete object and merely gave him control over Jennings' force at Lisbon. A stream of instructions followed these throughout the spring, but they dealt almost entirely with commerce protection and the development and use of the base at Port Mahon. The Dutch were angling for facilities for careening ; an immense amount of administrative work was being undertaken in connection with creating a sick station and later a naval hospital at Port Mahon ; and arrangements had to be made there for dealing with the ordnance stores.

Byng's first move was to despatch Whitaker with a small squadron to Leghorn for provisions and afterwards to Genoa and Finale to pick up more imperial troops. With these he was to join Byng at Barcelona. Jennings was also sent ahead to Barcelona with the corn ships, and Byng himself reached there on 8th June.

Whitaker now arrived with 2,000 imperial troops, and the whole fleet was concentrated and ready for any profitable enterprise which offered.

Byng's fleet then comprised—

one first rate,
one second rate,
sixteen third rates,
eleven fourth rates,
seven fifth rates,
together with smaller vessels, bombs and fireships.

It is uncertain whether all these ships were immediately available and at Barcelona, but the majority of them certainly were. What would Rooke and Shovell have done under the same circumstances? The conditions of the war in the Mediterranean had altered very much since they had commanded there, and there is every reason to suppose that had they been at Barcelona in 1709 they would have acted similarly to Byng. Profitable enterprises were difficult to discover, and at a council of war it was agreed that, in the absence of any definite instructions for a large-scale enterprise, it would be best for the fleet to separate into squadrons for commerce protection and subsidiary services. Jennings was despatched with thirteen ships, mostly frigates, to patrol the coast of Portugal, while Byng took a squadron to a position ten leagues south of Toulon, for intercepting enemy warships, trade, privateers or troops in transports, and also in order 'to alarm them all that might be.'

Byng reached Toulon on 21st June and saw only eight ships ready for sea in the harbour, from which he rightly concluded that the enemy would attempt no major enterprise that year. He therefore wrote to the Admiralty on 24th June, suggesting that he should return to England with six ships in two months' time, and then sailed for Barcelona. There he found Whitaker's squadron, together with some other ships which had returned from various services. Again Byng had a strong force available, and this time two plans were recommended to him. The Imperialists were extremely anxious to capture Sicily, while the British Cabinet were planning a combined attack on Cadiz.

Five thousand troops were to be sent out under Major-General Wills and to be escorted by Baker with eight of the line, while Byng and Stanhope were to co-operate with ships and troops from Catalonia. Byng was anxious for the Dutch squadron to join him, it having been separated in bad weather, but as time went on and it did not appear he decided to send Whitaker to Sicily with a small English squadron. But on 26th July 'Charles III' received news that the French were advancing through the Ampurdan on Gerona, and fearing lest he would not have enough ships for coastal work and for escorting corn ships from the Barbary coast he abandoned the Sicilian enterprise altogether. Byng therefore sent five ships to convoy the corn, and on 27th July he was joined by the Dutch from Leghorn. Next day he called a council of war, at which he proposed that some of the Dutch ships should co-operate in the attack on Cadiz, but the Dutch Admiral excused himself on the grounds that he only had provisions enough to last till 20th August, although he was prepared to co-operate in any work on the coast of Catalonia till ten days before that. They therefore decided that Byng should take six of the line on the Cadiz venture and that Whitaker should be left at Barcelona in command of all the remaining ships, both English and Dutch 'to perform such services as the King of Spain might have for them' (Burchett). These services Byng defined more particularly in his orders to Whitaker of 29th July and his two letters of 8th and 10th August, for the summaries of which I am particularly indebted to Lieutenant-Commander J. H. Owen and which owing to their importance I have included in the main text.

They give a vivid picture of the state of utter stagnation to which the war had reduced both sides. The French were suffering greatly from want of corn, since their agriculture was disorganised by conscription and their imports restricted by the Allies. Their troops, however, were harrying the outlying districts of Catalonia, and so were able to deprive the Imperial Court at Barcelona of all food except what could be obtained by sea. From

Galway's letter to Sunderland of 8th March, 1709, it appears that similar conditions prevailed in Portugal. Both sides sought to obtain corn from Barbary and the Levant, and the only force capable of increasing or restricting their supplies was the Anglo-Dutch fleet. Hence the prominence given to this matter in Byng's correspondence with Whitaker, to the almost total exclusion of offensive operations against the enemy's ships or territory; the first giving no opportunity for attack and the second yielding only barren results if captured.

In the middle of August Byng embarked Stanhope and the troops which were to co-operate with Wills' force against Cadiz. These troops consisted of Harrison's Foot, a regiment of dismounted Spanish dragoons, and an artillery train under the command of Colonel Michael Richards. This officer was a younger brother of John Richards, and although only thirty-six years old had already distinguished himself as an artillery and engineer officer. He had been A.D.C. to Marlborough at Ramillies and chief engineer and artillery officer to Galway during the Almanza campaign. In 1711 he was appointed Chief Engineer of Great Britain, and in 1714 Surveyor-General of the Ordnance; he died in 1721.

Sailing from Barcelona, the expedition reached Gibraltar on 20th August, where they expected to find Baker and Wills, this being the rendezvous from where the attack was to be made. Baker and Wills, however, had been delayed by contrary winds and did not reach Lisbon till 8th October, by which time Galway had come to the conclusion that in any case the attack was not feasible, the enemy having added considerably to their defences, and there being no prospect of a rising amongst the civil population, as had originally been expected. He therefore ordered the troops to continue their voyage under Baker's escort and to put themselves under Stanhope's command at Barcelona.

Meanwhile Byng, finding nothing at Gibraltar, had sent the Torbay, Colchester and Hawk fireship to Lisbon for intelligence, with Colonel du Bourgay on board as

military intelligence officer. Byng knew from Lord Pembroke's instructions of 9th August, which he had already received, what was to happen supposing the Cadiz project proved impracticable, and he also had Pembroke's permission to return to England as he had previously requested. He had still to deal with Stanhope's troops, however, who could not be left to return to Barcelona unprotected. They therefore sailed up the Spanish coast again, but meeting such strong easterly winds off Cape de Gata it was decided that they should all return to Gibraltar, where Stanhope and the troops were to wait for Baker and Wills to arrive, when Baker would escort both Wills' and Stanhope's forces to Barcelona.

Byng passed out of the Straits on 22nd September in the Royal Anne, with the ships named in Lord Pembroke's instructions of 9th August to be brought home. He arrived at Spithead on 25th September, and next day wrote to Burchett enclosing copies of his orders and letters to Whitaker.

As a result of acquiring and developing Port Mahon as a naval base, the whole Anglo-Dutch Mediterranean fleet had been able to clear there during the year, and in consequence had captured over thirty prizes, mostly corn ships, while Whitaker, in executing Byng's final instructions, took thirty storeships bringing food to the French troops in the Ampurdan.

For further information about the importance of corn supplies to the belligerents, see the *Naval Review*, vol. xvii (1929), articles by G. N. Clark (pp. 34–52 and 384–97) and by Lieut.-Commander J. H. Owen (pp. 489–96).

FROM JOSIAH BURCHETT

Admlty. Office. 28th Dec. 1708.

Sir,—Since my last to you, I have received your two Letters of the 4th of December from the River of Lisbon, which I have communicated to my Lord High Admiral, and I take this opportunity to acquaint you, that his Lordp. hath given directions to the Commissioners for Victualling, in every particular contained in your said Letter, relating to the Victualling the Garrison at Gibraltar, and the accounts to be given to Lisbon, and the care that is necessary to be taken by their Agent there; and as to that particular, of ships coming into the Bay of Cadiz, from her Majesty's Dominions, with Provisions for supply of the Enemy, it is sent to my Lord Sunderland, to be communicated to her Majesty, and I hope there will be some effectual care taken to punish those who are concerned therein.

With this you will receive Orders from my Lord High Admiral, by which you are directed how to govern yourself in joining the ships with Sir John Jennings on the Coast of Portugal, in case the Enemy should get together in the Mediterranean a greater Force than you shall have with you, and you will also receive another Order for your employing a good sailing fifth Rate for carrying intelligence between Gibraltar and Barcelona, as you have proposed; and a Warrant, by which you are empowered to cause to be executed such persons as shall be condemned to die by a Court Martial, for desertion, or other Crimes.

I hope the Convoy for Lisbon will sail from

Spithead by the middle or latter end of January at furthest, and the seven Dutch Ships of War (which I understand are all bound thither, and most of them to join you) are at Spithead.

What I have more to add is, that I send you by this the last Advice of the Enemy's motions at Sea, to which referring you, I remain,

Sir, your most humble Servt.,

J. BURCHETT.

I have recvd. your Letter of the 15th of Dec., with the Sentence of the Court Martial on the Lt. of the Restoration, and several other papers, which have been read to my Ld. High Admiral.

Endorsed:—Received 10th March 1709 by Suffolk.

ENCLOSURE.

FROM LORD PEMBROKE

Whereas by the Instructions which have been given to yourself and Sir John Jennings, you are to remain in the Straits with sixteen of her Majesty's ships, besides small Frigates, and the ships of the States General which will be appointed to join you, and Sir John Jennings is to continue with twelve of her Majesty's ships on the Coast of Portugal. And whereas it is necessary that all possible care should be taken to prevent your being surprised by the Enemy, in case it shall be their design, and that they shall have it in their power to get together in the Mediterranean from Toulon, Brest or elsewhere, a superior strength to you, you are therefore hereby required and directed (in

pursuance of her Majesty's pleasure signified to Me) to use your best endeavours to inform yourself, from time to time, what Naval Force the Enemy have at sea in the Mediterranean, and in case you shall judge them of so great strength as that you cannot be able to encounter them with safety with the ships under your Command, you are timely to consider at a Council of War what methods may be most proper and effectual for your joining the ships with Sir John Jennings, either by repairing to him, or by ordering him to join you ; And you are accordingly to govern yourself, I having directed Sir John Jennings, in such case, to obey your Orders.

Given under my hand this 27th of December 1708.

PEMBROKE.

FROM LORD PEMBROKE

Whereas by the Laws and Statutes of this Realm, the Lord High Admiral of Great Britain or Commissioner for Executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of Great Britain have [*sic*] power and authority to grant commissions to Inferior Vice Admirals or Commanders-in-Chief of any Squadron of Ships to call and assemble Courts Martial to consist of commanders and captains for putting in execution certain Articles and Orders in the Act of Parliament made in the 13th year of King Charles II. entitled an Act for Establishing Certain Articles and Orders for the Regulating and Better Government of the Navy, Ships of War, and Forces by Sea, and for trial of such persons as shall offend against the same ; I do therefore in Order thereunto hereby authorise and empower you to call

and assemble Courts Martial to consist of Commanders and Captains of her Majesty's ships according as is mentioned in the said Act of Parliament, who are to proceed to enquire into and Examine all Crimes and Offences committed by any person or persons whatsoever, against the said Articles and Orders, and to give sentence on such person or persons as shall be found offending against the same, either of pains of death or such other pains and penalties as shall be thought fit by the said Courts Martial according to the true intent and meaning of the said Articles and Orders, and to cause such due sentences to be executed accordingly, excepting that while you shall be in the Narrow Seas you do not execute any sentence of death excepting in Case of Mutiny.

And you are hereby empowered in the absence of the Judge Advocate of her Majesty's Fleet and his deputy, as often as you call Courts Martials, to order some fitting person to attend thereat for the more orderly proceedings of the same, for which this shall be your warrant.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Office of Lord High Admiral this 12th Jan. 1708/9.

PEMBROKE.

FROM LORD PEMBROKE

The Commissioners for Sick and Wounded Seamen and exchange of prisoners of war, having proposed that for the enabling them to keep more exact and regular accounts of the exchange of prisoners of war and fetching home her Majesty's subjects who are prisoners in France ; the Commanders of her Majesty's Fleets and Squadrons may be directed that as they take any prisoners

and set the men ashore, they do take receipts for them from the French Agents or Consuls residing at the place, and send home to England the Commission Officers. I do hereby require and direct you to give the necessary orders that when any prisoners are taken from the enemy by any of her Majesty's ships under your command, and the men taken in the said prizes are set ashore in any of the French Dominions, that the Commanders of her Majesty's ships, setting them ashore, shall require from the French Agents or Consuls of such places two receipts of like form and date for the said prisoner, one of which receipts they have to transmit to the said Commissioners by the first opportunity of conveyance and the other to bring home with them and send to that Board lest the former should have been miscarried, and in case any man should be left ashore where there is neither Agent or Consul there to take such double receipts from the Chief Person amongst the said prisoners to be made up in the manner aforesaid, and as any Officers shall be taken bearing the French King's Commission they are not to be set ashore with the other men, but sent home to England the first opportunity that offers, in order to their being exchanged by the said Commissioners for such Officers of her Majesty's subjects as are detained prisoners in France.

Given under my hand this 12th day of January 1708/9.

PEMBROKE.

FROM LORD PEMBROKE

Whereas it hath been represented to me from the Committee of the Levant Company that they

are of opinion their ships which are gone to Turkey may be clear of their last port in [*word illegible*] March next, and praying therefore that for the greater safety of those rich ships in their passage down the Straits, a reinforcement may be sent to their proper convoy and that the ships which shall be appointed for this service may cruise north and south of Pantellaria or more eastward to the Bight of Cerigo.[1]

I do therefore hereby direct and require you to consider of this matter, and if you shall find that you can spare any of her Majesty's ships under your command with regard to the other services recommended to you, and the strength and motion of the enemy, you are to appoint so many as you can so spare or as you shall judge necessary to proceed on the aforesaid service, directing the Commander-in-Chief of them forthwith to proceed and cruise north and south of Pantellaria as the Committee of the Company have proposed or more eastward to the Bight of Cerigo in case he shall have advices or reason to suspect the enemy will move that way to intercept them. You are to direct him to take particular care in looking out for the aforesaid ships of war and their convoys from Turkey, and that upon meeting them he accompanies them till such time as they shall be safe in the Port of Gibraltar, and that then he joins you at such place or in such station as you shall appoint, and as you are to keep these Orders secret so are you to direct the Commander-in-Chief of the ships you send on this service to do the like.

Given under my hand this 20th day of January, 1708/9.

PEMBROKE.

[1] Sometimes called Cythera.

FROM LORD PEMBROKE

Whereas application hath been made unto her Majesty by Mons. Uriberg in behalf of his Masters the States General, that the ships of the said States which are appointed to join you, and serve with you in the Mediterranean this year, may have the use of the Hulk at Port Mahon, and such other conveniences as you may have there, when they shall have occasion to careen so that they may not be obliged to retreat from the Mediterranean to Lisbon for that purpose, which will be very ill convenient to them, as would that to the Public Service; I do therefore in pursuance of her Majesty's pleasure, signified unto me the 15th of this month by Mr. Secretary Boyle, hereby direct and require you to permit the aforesaid ships of the States General to have the use of the Hulk and other conveniences at Port Mahon accordingly, but in case they shall be supplied with any stores which upon application you judge may be conveniently spared them, you are either to demand ready money for the same on the place, or to transmit an account thereof, and the Officer's Receipt as also the value of the said stores to the Navy Board, that so the money may be regularly demanded here.

Given under my hand this 16th day of Feb. 1708/9.

PEMBROKE.

FROM LORD PEMBROKE

Whereas the Commissioners for Sick and Wounded Seamen have represented to me that their business of their Agent at Port Mahon will be so very considerable as to require their imparting

to him great sums of money and have therefore proposed that as well to prevent the confusion in his accounts which may happen in case of his death, or sickness, or also mistakes in the musters, some person may be appointed to muster the sick and wounded seamen which come under his care and examine, check, and attest his accounts sent over to them ; I do therefore hereby empower, direct and require you as often as opportunity shall present for it, to order the Muster Master of the Squadron or if there be none there such other person as you shall think proper to muster the sick and wounded seamen sent ashore from her Majesty's ships to the said Agent, and you are yourself, as often as you have opportunity of doing the same, to examine, check and attest his said accounts and likewise perform yourself what monies shall be laid out by him in the execution of his office, and set your hand at the bottom of the Bills of Exchange which the aforesaid Agent shall draw on the Commissioners for Sick and Wounded Seamen that so they may be informed of the services which requires the Land, and for the enabling you to know the business of this Officer, you are to demand from him a copy of the Instructions which he received from the Commissioners for Sick and Wounded Seamen, who is hereby required to deliver the same to you.

Attested under his hand this 26th Feb. 1708/9.

PEMBROKE.

FROM LORD PEMBROKE

Whereas the Commissioners of the Victualling have represented to me that by the accounts they have received from their correspondenses abroad and particularly from Leghorn, that they find her

Majesty had been at a very great expense in trimming casks for the service of her Majesty's ships, I do order therefore to the saving as much as possible the extraordinary charge therein, you are hereby required and directed to order the respective commanders of her Majesty's ships of the Fleet now under your command, or which shall hereafter join you, to take a special care for the trimming and fitting her Majesty's cask by the coopers belonging to the said ships.

Given under my hand this 9th March 1708/9.

PEMBROKE.

FROM LORD PEMBROKE

Whereas the ships under your command in the Mediterranean may have frequent occasions of taking in Ordnance Stores at Port Mahon in the Island of Minorca ; I do therefore hereby require and direct you to give orders to their respective commanders that as often as they shall make demands of ordnance stores and be supplied therewith at Port Mahon aforesaid, they do take particular care to employ their own boats and men in bringing the same aboard to the land that as little time may be lost in the doing thereof as is possible.

Given under my hand this 25th day of March 1709.

PEMBROKE.

FROM LORD PEMBROKE

In pursuance of her Majesty's pleasure signified by the Right Hon. the Earl of Sunderland her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State, you are hereby required and directed that whenever

you send any of her Majesty's ships to the coast of Italy, you do order the captains of the said ships to bring from thence to Catalonia any recruits, clothing, money, troops, provisions, ammunitions, or any new francs that may be ready for transportation for the King of Spain's service provided the same may be done without interruption to the other services whereon they shall be employed.

Given under my hand this 27th April 1709.

PEMBROKE.

FROM LORD PEMBROKE

You are hereby required and directed to give orders to the Commanders of such ships as you may have occasion to send to Leghorn to receive on board them fourteen statues which Mr. Crowe [1] will have in his possession for the use of his Grace the Duke of Marlborough and you are particularly to recommend it to their care to stow them in such manner as that they may not be exposed to damage and when any ship or ships of her Majesty under your command shall be bound to Great Britain, you are to direct their commanders to bring the said statues with them.

Given under my hand this 16th day of May, 1709.

PEMBROKE.

FROM LORD PEMBROKE

Whereas application hath been made to the Queen by the Grand Duke of Tuscany, that her

[1] Christopher Crowe, or Crow, was British Consul and Prize Agent at Leghorn.

Majesty would be pleased to command strict orders to be given to the captains and officers of the ships and vessels of war in the Mediterranean that they do punctually and exactly observe when they come into the Port of Leghorn from any of those parts of the Levant which are suspected always for the Plague, or bring in any other vessels from thence as Prizes, the prescribed time for the making their quarantine, not only for the safety and preservation of the state of his Royal Highness, and of all Italy, but of all Europe also, and for the making good of laws and rules which are held by him sacred and even inviolable ; I do therefore in obedience of her Majesty's pleasure hereby direct and require you forthwith to give orders to the respective captains of her Majesty's ships under your command, to take an especial care to comply therewith when they come into the aforesaid port of Leghorn in such manner as may give satisfaction to the Grand Duke and be most consistent with her Majesty's service.

Given under my hand this 25th June 1709.

PEMBROKE.

FROM LORD PEMBROKE

Whereas by her Majesty's proclamation the Commanders of ships which take Prizes are required to transmit as soon as may be to the Principal Officers and Commissioners of her Majesty's Navy true lists of the names of all the Officers, Seamen and others who are actually on board the said ships at the taking such prizes containing the number of each person as he stands upon the books, together with his quality,

and that the said lists shall be subscribed by the captain or commanding officer, and three or more of the chief officers on board, for their being examined by the Muster Books, and certified by the aforesaid Principal Officers and Commissioners of the Navy, and whereas the intention thereof is to secure to every man on board at the time of such captives, his right to the proportion of the Prize; you are therefore hereby required and directed to give strict orders to the captains of her Majesty's ships and vessels which now are or shall be under your command that they do without loss of time transmit such lists as are wanting, and that whenever they take any prizes for the future, they do by the very first opportunity transmit to the Commissioners of her Majesty's Navy perfect lists of the names of all the officers, seamen and others that are actually on board at the time the said prizes are taken, in which lists are to be expressed the number of each person as he stands on the books together with their respective quality, the same to be attested by themselves and three or more of the Chief Officers on board, that so the said Commissioners may be the better enabled to examine and certify the said lists with the Agents that shall be employed by the captors.

And you are also to give strict orders to the aforesaid captains of her Majesty's ships under your command that they do at their peril take particular care to transmit unto the aforesaid Commissioners of her Majesty's Navy by the very first opportunity not only what muster books are in arrear, pursuant to the Article in their General Instructions relating to that matter, but that they do take the like care to send to them their said muster books for the future in the form

directed by the said instructions once in every two months or as soon after as they can possibly find opportunities for doing the same.

Given under my hand this 19th July 1709.

PEMBROKE.

[Summary of orders and letters from Byng when handing over the Mediterranean command to Whitaker; copies enclosed by Byng in his letter to the Admiralty from the Royal Anne at Spithead, 26 October 1709 (Admiralty Despatches, Public Record Office, 1/897).]

BYNG TO WHITAKER

'Whereas it was resolved in the council of war held yesterday to leave a squadron of her Majesty's ships under your command, together with the squadron of the States General, as well to protect the coast of Catalonia as to operate on such other services as the interest of the common cause may require, you are therefore in pursuance of the said resolutions hereby required and directed to take her Majesty's ships named in the margin [1] under your command and with such of them as are now with you, together with the Dutch, proceed and cruise off the coast of Rosas and

[1] Humber
Boyne
Suffolk
Revenge
Bedford
Lennox
Captain
Nassau
Defiance
Dunkirk
Worcester
Centurion
Milford
Falcon Pink
Terrible
Fame
Martha, Hospital

Collioure [?], and the gulf of Narbonne, and endeavour as much as possible, to prevent the enemy's receiving any supply of provisions or ammunitions by sea, continuing so long on this station so long as the circumstances of affairs, as you shall judge absolutely necessary for the service so to do.

'And whereas the greatest part of the ships that compose the squadron which is to remain under your command is now disposed on different services, you are to leave here such directions for their commanders joining you when the said services are performed, as you shall think proper, and to employ yourself from time to time with the whole and part of the squadron . . . in such manner as shall be judged by a council of war of English and Dutch officers to be the most advantageous to the public service, whether by taking, sinking, burning or otherways destroying the enemy's ships of war or molesting their trade, annoying their coasts, or doing what injuries you can unto them ashore; and as you are' [to keep in close correspondence with the Ministers at the Courts of Spain and Savoy], 'so are you upon the application of either of these Princes to assist and operate in such services as shall be desired by them of you, so far as shall be thought by a council of war as aforesaid, regard being always had to the naval preparations and motions of the enemy.

'And whereas in the greatest straits and difficulties that France at present labours under in its provinces which border upon the Mediterranean for want of corn, the intercepting or destroying the commerce, which they drive for grain up the Levant, and on the coast of Barbary, would be of the utmost advantage to the public

interest, you are, pursuant to her Majesty's pleasure signified to me by my Lord Sunderland' [on 14 June], 'to have a particular regard to that service, disposing from time to time such ships as can be spared, on such stations . . . most proper for intercepting the aforesaid commerce.'

[When the Antelope and Ludlow Castle rejoin, they are to follow and join Sir George Byng with any correspondence for him or for General Stanhope. Whitaker is to report his proceedings to the Lord High Admiral's Secretary and to Sir George Byng, and he is to be responsible for all uncompleted and unexecuted orders already issued to Sir George Byng.]

'Dated aboard the Royal Anne in Barcelona Road the 29th July 1709.'

BYNG TO WHITAKER

[Admiralty Despatches, P.R.O. 1/897.]

'Royal Anne in Barcelona Road,
'8th August.

'. . . glad to hear of your success in the surprising the enemy's barques at Rosas, which is esteemed here a very good service, . . . your lying on that coast has without doubt put them to difficulties, by depriving them of all means of transporting but by land carriage. . . .'

[The enemy's present plan seems to be to ravage the Ampourdan and to carry off corn. Byng and Stanhope have been discussing the question of getting corn from the Barbary Coast, the delays, short measure, and the shortcomings of our consul 'in that country.']

'I need not enlarge to you on the circumstances of this country, you very well know the great apprehensions they are under here of a dearth of corn, and of consequence what an acceptable service . . . will be the securing them from these necessities, as there seems at present no immediate service to call your ships upon, and I take it for granted that by the time this reaches you, the Dutch will be thinking of going to Leghorn, since there is no tidings [*sic*] there of their convoy . . . from Holland, we are of opinion' [that the best service Whitaker can perform is to collect all the transports, victuallers, and storeships, he can, both from Barcelona and Port Mahon and go to Algiers], 'and press that government to the conclusion of their bargain, and to settle it upon such a foot that we may be at a certainty that they will not use any more shifts or delays in that affair; our consul . . . must be roundly dealt with. . . . .'

[Byng recommends to Whitaker the use of the Western Ports, such as Cape Tunis or Oran, as French influence is so high in the east part of the country. Stanhope recommends Whitaker to get as much barley as possible, wheat not being so scarce, and points out the need for despatch], 'for our ships will have but an ill time on that coast when the season for bad weather approaches . . . "

[Sunderland said in his last letter that the intercepting of the enemy's corn trade is] 'a service of the utmost importance.'

[Byng sends 'my thoughts' and a scheme for cruising, and suggests the convoy to Algiers; the corn for the allies should return under the Defiance, Dunkirk and Centurion. Stanhope agrees with these ideas.]

BYNG TO WHITAKER

[Admiralty Despatches, P.R.O., 1/897.]

'Royal Anne in Barcelona Road,
'10 August.'

[The Antelope and Worcester arrived last night from cruising up the Levant, they met nine French men of war off Pantellaria, on an easterly course, probably going to Smyrna or] 'somewhere that way' [for corn].

'As the intercepting of the squadron . . . would be a service of the greatest moment, I am thinking that if, when you returned from Algiers, you could make up a squadron time enough to cruise in the Channel of Malta to meet with them, it would be the best service you could go upon; by that time you return from Barbary, it is very probable you will . . . have your ships pretty well up together, so that if nothing causes too long a stay at Algiers, you may have a chance to come timely enough to give a sensible blow to France, for it is natural to believe they cannot be coming away from thence, 'till towards the middle or latter end of September; these are my thoughts which you will be best able to improve upon as the circumstances of the service will permit you, but in this, as in everything else, I wish you all the prosperity and success imaginable. . . .'

FROM LORD PEMBROKE

Whereas by your letter of 24th June last, you have made it your request that in regard there is no appearance of any considerable action for the

Fleet to enterprise in the Mediterranean, when two months shall be expired after the date of your letter, you may have leave to repair to Great Britain, with the ships named in the margin [1] hereof; and whereas I have communicated your request to her Majesty and received her Majesty's Royal consent to your so doing, you are therefore hereby required and directed forthwith upon your receipt hereof, to put the said ships in the best conditions you are able, and then to repair with them home, but in your way you are to call at Lisbon, not only for any further orders that may be judged necessary to send you but to bring home with you such trade as may be ready to sail.

And whereas I have in pursuance of her Majesty's pleasure sent orders to Rear Admiral Baker that if when he arrives off of the River Lisbon, it shall be judged impracticable to attempt Cadiz, he does then forthwith proceed directly to Barcelona, with the ships under his command, mentioned also in the margin [2] hereof, and the transport ships with the troops on board them, and upon his arrival there, to act in such manner as shall be judged most proper for the public service, upon advising with Lt.-Gen. Stanhope and the said Rear Admiral being likewise further directed to leave the victuallers and storeships at Lisbon, in case he hath not such certain advice of you, as that he may join you with them in

[1] Royal Anne
Chichester
Torbay
Defiance
Antelope
Martha
Smyrna Factor, Hospital

[2] Stirling Castle
Somerset
Resolution
Pembroke
Chatham
Exeter
Winchelsea
Lynn
Griffin Fireship
Salamander, Carcass } Bombs
Pembroke, Hospital

his passage up the Mediterranean without interruption to him in his proceedings to Barcelona. You are in case he does not bring them to you, to consider in what manner you may best supply the ships which you bring home with you, and how the others you leave in the Mediterranean may be the soonest and most effectually furnished from the said victuallers and storeships, and take the proper measures therein accordingly.

You are to put the charge of the ships and vessels which you leave behind you in the Mediterranean under the command of Sir Edw. Whitaker, to whom you are to give strict orders to comply in the best manner that possibly he can, with such instructions as you have already received from her Majesty, or myself, or that may be sent to him, as also to put in execution all such services as shall be from time to time recommended to him by the King of Spain, as far as the same shall be found practicable, and you are to consider at a Council of War whether it may be desirable to add the ships with Sir Edw. Whitaker to Rear Admiral Baker, or how they may be otherwise employed for the public advantage, and give orders thereon accordingly. But in regard I have received an account that the enemy's privateers off of Malaga and of parts thereabout have lately taken several ships of her Majesty's subjects, coming down the Straits, you are to take particular care to appoint some ships to cruise in such a station thereabouts, as may be most proper for intercepting the ships of the enemy and securing our trade.

And whereas it is likely that when Sir John Jennings comes from Lisbon (pursuant to the orders which are sent to him) he will not leave above three or four ships of war to attend on the

coast of Portugal, and it being agreed by the Treaty with that Crown that there should be twelve for that service, you are therefore to consider at a Council of War what ships of those which you leave with Sir Edw. Whitaker and those with Admiral Baker, as of those with the former only, may be spared to add to these which Sir John Jennings will leave at Lisbon, and give directions for these to join them accordingly, and if you shall judge it more for the service to leave Sir Edw. Whitaker with the command of the ships in the Mediterranean, or to send him to command the Lisbon Squadron, and leave Rear Admiral Baker in the Straits, you are accordingly to do the same ; and as in the first case you are to give instructions to Sir Edw. Whitaker for his proceedings, so are you to give proper orders to Rear Admiral Baker for his government on the coast of Portugal, if you send him thither.

Given under my hand this 9th Aug. 1709.

PEMBROKE.

FROM LORD PEMBROKE

Whereas it hath been represented unto me by the merchants trading up the Levant that the entrance into the Narrow Passages of the Straits have been the stations where the enemy have most annoyed their trade with their cruising ships, for which reason they have made it their request that eight of her Majesty's ships from 40 to 60 guns may be appointed to cruise in divisions between Cape Palos and the Straits' Mouth, and the Capes of Trafalgar and Spartel, as far as Cape St. Vincent, and that they may be constantly employed on those stations and no other (unless there shall be a necessity to take them therefrom

for some time for the good of the public service) and refitted and victualled at Gibraltar. And whereas the aforesaid merchants have also represented to me that the rendezvous of the French Cruising ships within the Straits being at Carthagena and Malaga, they are humbly of opinion that as the latter is an open port it is very feasible to attack and take or destroy them that may be at anchor there. And since the security of the trade in passages up and down the Straits (most of the ships being very rich) is of very great consequence to the public ; You are therefore hereby required and directed to consider in what manner they may be best protected by some of the ships under your command, from time to time in the Straits, although so great a number as the merchants desire cannot be spared, and accordingly you are to appoint so many as can be spared from other passing services, to cruise between Cape Palos and the Straits Mouth, directing them to spare as little time in port as possibly may be when they shall go into clean, or to revictual at Gibraltar, at which place care is to be taken that that part of the provisions and necessary stores sent or to be sent from home for the use of the Fleet be from time to time lodged, and that they do use their utmost endeavours to intercept the enemy's ships while cruising, or in the aforesaid Bay of Carthagena, and in protecting the trade of her Majesty's subjects passing up to or from the Levant, and that in case they meet with any of our merchant ships coming down the Straits they do take particular care to see them in safety to Gibraltar. But in regard there will also be a want of ships to cruise for their security when they shall have passed the Straits as aforesaid, you are therefore (pursuant to my late orders), to appoint some of the ships you command to join the three or four

which Sir John Jennings will leave at Lisbon, and direct the officers, who you appoint to command the said ships at Lisbon, to detail as many as can there be spared from the necessary services, with directions to them to cruise between the Capes Trafalgar and Spartel as far as Cape St. Vincent, and to use their best endeavours to protect the trade and annoy the enemy. And whereas it is necessary that these ships should also clean, refit and revictual at Gibraltar, you are to direct them to give their commanders the necessary orders therein, and to take care that provisions and all things convenient be lodged at that port for them. And the aforesaid merchants having made further application to me, that a frigate may be appointed to convoy 4 rich ships of theirs which are bound from home up the Mediterranean, valued at no less than1 50,000 sterling, as high as the port of Leghorn, which request of theirs I have granted, you are therefore hereby required and directed to give the necessary directions to the cruising ships before mentioned to look out carefully for the security of these four ships, when they come within the limits of their cruising stations. And in case you do happen to meet with them in their passage up the Straits, or hear where they are, or that any of the Levant Trade shall be ready to sail from any port in the Mediterranean, so as that you may have an opportunity of strengthening them for their better security, you are from time to time to do the same, and then order the ships of war to return and join you. I having directed the Capt. of the Frigate I appoint for this service to put himself under your command when he has seen the trade up to Leghorn.

Given under my hand this 12th August, 1709.

PEMBROKE.

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